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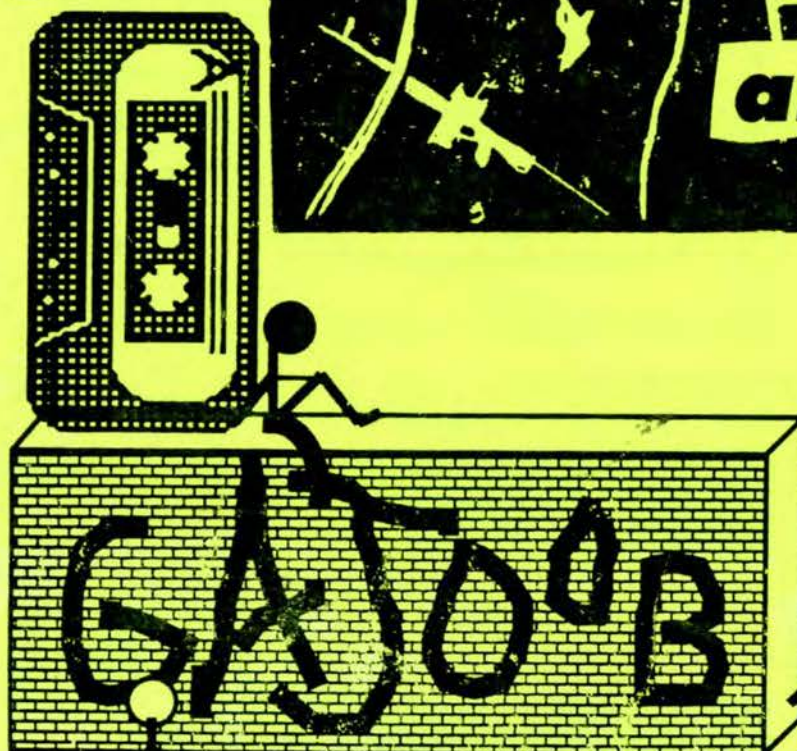
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**Delving
Further
Into**

Cassette Culture

5

**SPRING
1990**



Independent

Cassette Magazine

GAJOOB Magazine

is published triannually
(three times per year)

by

**ApPLeGoOn
PuBLiCaTiOnS**

&

tApEs

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EDITED by BRYAN BAKER



"Crazy" - Thurston Moore

"It conjures up visions" - Brian Aldiss

"When the last song was finished, all the
birds fell dead from the sky"
- Richard Schindler

"A Salvador Dali of music" - GYPSY

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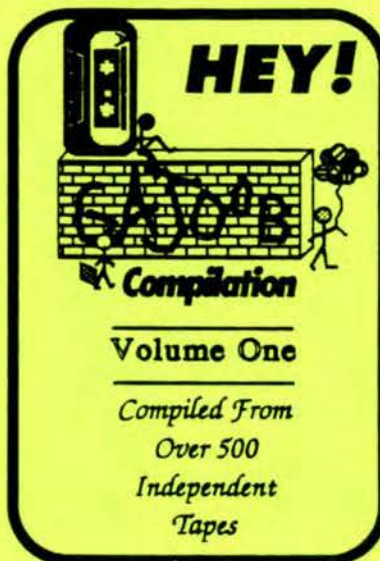
GAJOOB is a forum for independent recording artists, without regard to stylistic parameters. **Contributions** in the form of letters, essays, prose, photos, art, comics, etc., are requested and appreciated. Payment is in copies.

GAJOOB still reviews every tape you care to send. This is hardly a common practice. Be patient-- I hope to catch up by next issue. Honest, I do! You will receive a copy of the review of your tape(s) upon publication.

The current **GAJOOB subscription rate** is \$10 for four issues, ppd, in the U.S.; \$12--Canadian and \$15--foreign (shipped via air). U.S. funds or current foreign equivalent are both equally acceptable.

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Enjoy.....



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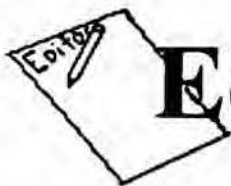
All the independent recording artists in Cassette Culture who support the music and send tapes. It's sincerely appreciated.

and

Cameron and Louise for a great weekend!

Lisa Marley for proofreading and for her immeasurable support. Hand me my shoe.....





Editorial

Many people just don't understand. So I'll attempt to spell it out as plainly as I can.

Cassette Culture, I mean.....

It starts with a tape recorder — any kind will do — and a certain feeling we get when we hear the sounds we make, and think to ourselves whatever it is we think to ourselves at that particular moment of satisfaction: the apogee of creation.

The emotion is personal and indescribable, yet we somehow have an urge to share it; and even sometimes to describe it.

We subject people to the sounds we make, and then reach for some sort of reaction; and it's forever elusive.

There are thousands of us out here. Every one of us, manic — no doubt.

It's called "Cassette Culture." It's what you get when you get a society made up of profound individuals who mostly communicate through the mail, all searching for sounds they themselves can call their own, thereby, showing the world who they are.

Think about it.

We certainly don't do it for the money — unless it's the absence of money you're looking for, look elsewhere.

Nor do we do it for mass acclaim. Creation, most of us feel, is much too personal for that.

I doubt most of us would turn these things down (money, especially); but they're really not what drives us.

Enough Concept.

The reality of it is that we record sounds, and soon we have a whole tape of them. So we make



a tape. We dub several copies, then send them out into the world.

Sometimes we send them to people we simply want to have them: friends, curious acquaintances, people we've come into contact with through the mail.

And we send them out to various alternative publications, such as this one, for a hopeful review, because it lets a whole lot of people know we exist. By doing this, we hope to gain more contacts and expand our own society a little further.

We send a few to certain radio stations or people who do programs that play independent cassettes. It's the expansion of contacts thing again, don't you know?

Somebody might band a whole bunch of us onto a single tape and release that by way of a compilation — killing a whole slew of birds with a single stone, if you will. On contact.

We write to people we've made contact with and share our thoughts and our passions.

The world is small, afterall.

And, yes, some of us still steadfastly cling to the idea of "making it" in music BUSINESS. Some do, anyway.

This is Cassette Culture.

It's music and sounds made independently, and distributed in a number of ways on cassette tape.

It's satisfying when you make contact with someone you can truly exchange with.

Exchange is our motivation. Making contact is the way we do it.

And it's fun to just DO it.

But, in order to make it work (however you want it to work), it takes a little involvement.

Read this magazine, and you'll get a sense of what it is people are thinking, and doing. Then, read the reviews and decide which tapes sound interesting to YOU.

WRITE WRITE WRITE.

And then write some more.

Send your own tapes out to people. It will pay off eventually. You'll make some new friends. You'll possibly even collaborate on new sounds through the mail. There are many things to be done, and they all begin by simply making contact.

This is what GAJOOB is for: making contact. And it's an open forum, so please feel free to participate. Think of it as a messenger.

But, don't *just* think of it.....

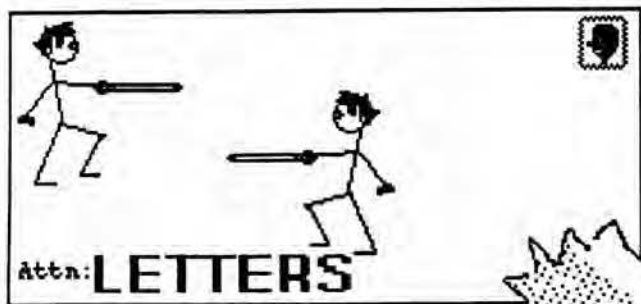
Goo Goo GAJOOBing *the world over*

GAJOOB is getting around. I thought it would be fun to make this chart so you can see where the word is being heard. Send in your tape, or contribute to GAJOOB in some other fashion, and you'll be heard in these places too.



International...





Dear Bryan:

I enjoyed reading your editorial on Cassette Culture in your latest issue. Every time I see the term "Cassette Culture" I marvel at how prevalent the term has become since I coined the term near the end of 1986. I'm not being facetious. As far as I know I did invent the term and featured it on the cover of Sound Choice No. 7, the issue where we offered free cassettes to new subscribers.

At the time I began using the term I don't believe I had heard anyone refer to the cassette scene as "cassette culture." Cassette Underground seemed to be the term used in those days.

But just in case I am wrong on this matter, I would encourage your readers to set me straight. Does anyone have any evidence of the term "Cassette Culture" being used prior to late 1986 when I began soliciting cassette artists to contribute copies of their work for our Cassette Culture Promotion?

I bring up this matter, not so much that I get credit for coining a term, but in the interest of finding out more about the way ideas and concepts are transmitted through our society. When I began using Cassette Culture in print, I was conscious that the term was likely to help elevate the cassette scene in the public's eye by giving it a catchy and important sounding handle which people, both inside and outside the cassette scene, could grab a hold of. This was my aim and apparently it worked.

I would appreciate your reader's comments on this, as again, perhaps I am not completely correct. Maybe I did pick up the term subconsciously from a source. The universal mind perhaps? But in my mind, coining the term was a very conscious, deliberate decision.

Keep up the good work. I appreciate the spirit you offer.

David Claffardini
Sound Choice
Ojai, CA

So, how about it, gentle readers? Can anyone out there set David straight, or confirm his claim? Let me know.....

Bryan—

Thanks a bunch for the unexpected & unsolicited copy of GAJOOB #3. It's a pleasant surprise. The letters section was *lotsa* fun.

Hope you keep this department. The interviews were all interesting—I haven't heard of any of the folks but reading their interviews makes me interested in exchanging tapes. The reviews are also helpful. All in all, it's an excellent product for just the third issue of a magazine and God knows there's room for more mags covering the cassette culture.

Nick
Fort Wayne, IN

The whole point to interviews with people in cassette culture is that you do know these people, because you're one of them. You're doing the same things they are, and you can learn from their thoughts. We're all one, big, happy family. Ha Ha Hal

Dear Bryan Baker,

Our band is called Beefadelphia. No matter how neatly we write it out, people still say, "What does that say?"—and we always say to those people, "Why, it says Turnips and Broccoli, what the hell do you think it says!"

That's the way we like it. We like to shake-up the folks who are stupid like dogs.

Anyways, won't you please review our tape in your fanzine? We think we deserve it even though we're just a moose-lip band..... but we like it that way okay enough that we keep putting out songs by the armloads. We love you groovy cats with fanzine, sendaway, tape culture because it will give us the money we need to buy more stuff for our band which we love also.

So please give us responsitide in your next issue because we're Beefadelphia and not Rick Astley.

Once more and again with love,
Beefadelphia
Lockport, NY

"WOOF!"

Hey kiddo - Nice to see your smiling mag again...

Whatever it is that readers of my last diatribe in GAJOOB will say in criticism has been, in my mind, already answered within that letter.

It should be clear by now that all I ever meant by the phrase, "dink-shit," was recordings of low-fidelity and unreliable quality. There was no further intention of impugning those artists who find themselves limited to such formats, myself being one of them. I'm very, very tired of

people thinking that I have a vendetta against artists working outside the commercial mainstream, or alternately, that I am obsessed with the machinations of Big Industry. All I EVER said, in fact, was that it makes sense for artists not to restrict themselves to the vacuum of an overly-insulated community, to be aware of the full spectrum of movement around them, simply in order to remain true to your own work and that of other artists around you, and simply to remain viable within the socio-economic structure of the society as a whole.

People tag me with negativism. I am very much over my negativism. Those who know me are aware that my first priority is my love and support of the music. What automated culture does to the music once they get their hands on it, really doesn't concern me as much as some people think it does. It hurts that those opinions I've had to continually restate in the indie mags have alienated me from good people like Michael Chocholak. It's obviously reached the point that the strength with which I have asserted my opinions has done more harm than good for my public image; in reality all I'm after is what you said in Issue #3, that the music speak for me.

And you are right when you say in Issue #4 that the way that people perceive your art isn't important. But I have a label, a business, and I have to consider if the point of view of my peers is negative towards myself in such a way that I overshadow the music. It is obvious to me that this is the case. I will not stand on top of this music, especially if this is in detriment to the artists I represent.

Therefore, I have decided to refrain from all further journalistic discourse on the subject of "the music," and involve myself solely on the basis that the music will speak for itself, and that neither myself nor anything else will stand in its way.

You may now return to your regularly scheduled party line, already in progress.

Carl Howard
Sheriff, aT County
Bayside, NY

Those of you who have been fortunate enough to have been privy to the previous issues' friendly banter between Carl and myself will undoubtedly be saddened by its absence, as I know I will be.

Saddened by the thought that should someone offer any sort of constructive criticism, it will only be labeled "negative," thereby casting a negative light on the writer's music.

Inconceivable as this is to my mind, let me assure those of you who have thought this about Carl and aT, only judging from his past letters in GAJOOB, that his label produces consistently substantial independent recordings, ranging from purely experimental to cutting-edge rock, in very high quality.

Bryan,

I really enjoyed the interview with Dino DiMuro. About a year ago I ordered "A Real Pretty Rose" and I loved it. The tape both inspired and depressed me at the same time. It inspired me to get my own 4-track and begin recording. After hearing it I knew that home recordings could be just as good (or better!) than a lot of crap that comes out on vinyl or CDs by big record companies. It depressed me

because I knew I could never be that good [oh, come now—b]. He's too high a standard for me to live up to, so I guess I won't [please stop—b]! Besides, Dino lives in Los Angeles where I was born and lived until I was about 12 years old. I'll never forgive my parents for moving to Louisiana. I loved California! Oh, well... Anyway, after reading the interview I pulled out my copy of "A Real Pretty Rose" and played it again. I should order another of his tapes.

I also enjoy the letters section. I've always liked letter sections in magazines but the ones in GAJOOB seem more personal. I like that.

Also the rating system you give the tapes is a good idea. It's like a second opinion to the written review. Keep it in!

A couple days ago I got my first letter from someone wanting my tape. They even sent money! Thanks to GAJOOB!

Steven Boone
Ticklaw, LA

Hey Bryan!

How's it going? Thanks for the review & copy of GAJOOB... I really enjoy 'em. My only disappointment was your going to a rating system. I really liked your essay at the back of your May issue, saying that you reviewed each tape in light of what you felt the artist was trying to accomplish.... whereas, to me, a rating system grades tapes according to each other. Since we can't buy every tape or attend every concert, we all "discriminate"—often on the basis of what we've read about the musicians. I like your reviews, but I think a rating system makes the process too formal. Unless it's absolutely necessary, why hurt even one person's feelings (or allow someone to start feeling better than other persons)? Just a thought.... I like what you're doing!!!

Best wishes!
Nyle Frank
Nashville, TN

Actually, I've doubted the validity of rating tapes myself; but my intention in doing so is not to rate them in relation to other tapes, but in how I feel they represent their own intentions. I assume that everyone who takes the time to make a tape, knowing full well that chances are slim that any more than a handful of people will even get exposed to it, knows what they want to accomplish. I don't believe it is my position to judge style. If someone wants to play Pop or Punk or Industrial or Experimental, that's their decision. My only intention is to review a tape based on whether or not I feel an artist is accomplishing what he or she wants to accomplish.

As far as ratings go, you may take three stars as the starting point. Anything lower than that means that I feel the tape falls short; anything higher means that a tape exceeds expectations. Sometimes I fail, of course.

Dear Bryan—

I've had the #3 GAJOOB a while now—is #4 out? Please send, if and or when....

Very busy on a new work... all sound, rhythms and pitches sampled from Dylan Thomas voice (oh, there's some beer poured down a sewer, but 98% is DT).

If you're interested, most of *Common Ground* is electric guitar or electric harp. "ysbryd"

is not a live recording (almost is) but is from what I'm testing on the road with my drumbox buddy, Danny Banana. Havin' fun gettin' broke, stayin' out of Indiana.... Southern boy goes home (Memphis) but still picking up the mail here.

Off,
Brian Wells
Indianapolis, IN

bryan—

K7L, *Hearing Double in Lacquerland* by Industrial High Society [see review in issue #4] was sent to GAJOOB for review for various reasons: 1st, because it had never been reviewed, and 2nd, because I wanted to test whether you have much interest in the type of "amusical" residue from social experimentation that few labels, if any, other than Widemouth, are willing to publish.

My purpose in this letter is not even to explain why I find/consider K7L to be interesting/important/whatever—in a sense, I'm glad that you reviewed it negatively because I think that it's not the sort of thing that even most K7 culture people would even like a little.

I'm not a salesperson, I just publish stuff that I like that's mainly unavailable elsewhere & hope that I'll occasionally connect with people with similar interests (which has, fortunately, happened—but most often with "interdisciplinary" people—rather than people who consider themselves to be primarily "musicians," for example).

At any rate, here are 2 newer releases that have broader appeal insofar as they're more "musically" inclined—perhaps you'll like them more.

You'll note that the 2 tapes might seem to be the same if you look at them superficially—the story behind this is that both my friend & collaborator, John Berndt & I were planning on making tapes of selected excerpts from various improvisations that we'd done solo or collectively over the past couple of years so we each decided to edit our tapes from material from the same period without letting the other know what we were choosing so that we could surprise each other with the contrasts between our respective products & so that I could make available 2 subtly inter-related tapes, a thorough perception of which would require attention to nuance—this is deliberately heightened by the packaging's having an identical cover (except for the slightly differing spines)—of course, the actual contents of the tapes are quite different from each other.... - additionally, our selections differ—as do our ways of treating them, etc.

best wishing wells,
tentatively, a convenience
baltimore, md

I was discussing with a friend the difficulty of reviewing tapes, based strictly on their own merits; and naturally, your last tape came up. It happens to be, in my opinion, a perfect example. As an aside, it was my friend's contention that the "music" on a tape should "speak" for itself and should not have to rely on packaging to explain itself. However, I argued that since a tape is usually presented as a package, the "music" and its packaging should be treated as a whole—the whole being the

product or idea. With this in mind, I maintained, regardless of the "bad" review I gave your tape in issue #4, that your work "worked" in terms of presenting the idea that industrialization has dehumanized humans by their willingness to perform inhuman acts. My friend, steadfastly clinging to his quickly waning sense of self-worth, argued that, however this may be, the tape itself is still ultimately tedious and not something he'd wish to experience. Although my review was written well before this conversation took place, I'm afraid its point of view reflects my friend's opinion, and not my later thoughts on the subject.

He added that, in his opinion, in order for the tape to "work," you should attempt to juxtapose the thoughts expressed in the liner notes with the documentation that exists on the current recording; such as dubbing in big-machinery sounds, and interspersing that with the seemingly pointless and distant conversation and expressions currently found on the tape. This is only a thought, and obviously not the only idea that could be implemented with regards to your concept.

It's also interesting to note, that while the tapes you recently sent me have infinitely more personal appeal, they will cause me to reflect and ponder to a much lesser extent than *"Hearing Double in Lacquerland"* did and does.

dear bryan—

thanks for your response to my response to your review of *"Hearing Double in Lacquerland"*—your having written it at all is a good sign to me that you're "open" to certain "theory" issues.... - to respond point by point to your letter, I'm not interested in the context of "music" PERIOD. - it's an outmoded framework no matter how much it's updated—I prefer newer language to contextualize what I present—I often refer to my manipulations of audio as U(S)ICAL (or, more simply, as USICAL)—for the same developments of this being USIC - 1, BOOED USIC [see article in this issue for a description of this—b], etc.... - people who say that what I do is not music/art are perfectly correct—unfortunately, they usually assume that what I'm trying to do (& failing at) is be a musician/artist—this is merely a projection of their own assumptions (& lack of imagination)—as for your friend's contention that "music" on a tape should not "rely on packaging to explain itself": why should anything have to be a particular way all the time?—it's exactly this type of thinking that says: "music should always be diatonic," "the only good music is rock'n'roll," "the only good music is classical," blah, blah, blah.... - why not explore every possibility that occurs to you (perhaps short of ripping out someone's eyeballs for the sake of getting a recording of their vocalized agony, or whatever)—in other words, there will always be reasons/"reasons" for not doing something that you can imagine (& a multitude of pro & con philosophies)—so, I'm just exposing my own philosophical bias against your friend's variety of restricted formal thinking)

- some "music"/audio/whatever might be excessively package dependent if it even needs to be recorded & played back!—strictly



speaking, the Lacquerland recording(s) aren't presented to the public to just say (or to say at all) that "industrialization has dehumanized humans" - i'm poor (by "1st world" standards - i'm rich by "3rd world" standards) - at the time that the Lacquerland tapes were made (in the late 70s, early 80s) my average yearly income was around \$3,000 - as a much more flagrant "weirdo" than almost any other human being i've ever met (someone is bound to take me to task for that one, eh?) getting a job was/is almost impossible - especially one in wch i cd feel like i was preserving some integrity of personality/individuality - as such, i worked as a hardwood floor finisher (these daze, i'd almost be happy if someone wd even hire me to do that! but then i've been w/out income for 4 months) - the Lacquerland tapes are more a demonstration of my attempts to subvert (even slightly) what was a miserable & grinding aspect of my impoverishment - your friend didn't want to experience the "tedium" of the tape & i didn't want to experience the tedium of the job - the tape, however, is substantially *less* "tedious" than the job.... & such activities as what Industrial High Society delved into can make the job almost bearable - the point being that if i find myself in a "bad" situation i try to turn it into something more positive - the Lacquerland tapes are an "extreme" example of this &, as such, "important" - maybe someday, i'll be making the "Prison Tapes" or the "Death Row Tapes" - not as an outsider making some "artistic" commentary about such things, but as an insider trying to survive w/ imagination & communication skills intact - but i hope not! - as for your friend's suggestion that i dub in "big machinery sounds": that's exactly what i *don't* want to do - in fact, it's precisely that sort of "musical" embellishment that i think wd divert the listener from the quasi-documentary content (see Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle for a partial explanation of my use of the prefix "quasi") & turn it too much into an "aesthetic" experience (there's much more to be said by me about all of this, but i'm trying to keep this letter short - & i'm not doing a very good job of it, eh?) - i like the contrast between the Industrial High Society material & the usual "Industrial Music" - i'd hoped that it wd be obvious that the tape is published partially as an indirect commentary on such things - i.e.: here's some (un)"real" life residue from the industrial world wch isn't *drama* - in other words, here's something that's more directly industrial (in one sense at least) than most "Industrial Music" wch doesn't use the vocabulary of cliches that "big-machinery sounds" (or womyn's screams) are so much a part of.... - hence its being a recording rather than a transcript): i recommend listening to it closely w/ headphones on (maybe one channel only 1st, the other channel only 2nd, & both channels at once some other time...) - in order to *study* the meanderings of desperate lacquer infused workers trying to escape thru the meager doorway of perception that the job unintentionally offers - maybe you'll get something out of it, maybe you won't - if you don't get something out of it then the tape's not for you - like a book, it may not be something you'll return to again & again - but it's probably at least worth listening to closely once... -

best wishing wells,
TENTATIVELY, a CONVENIENCE

Bryan—

Thanks for sending GAJOOB #4. I really think that you have a really good mix of letters, interviews, and reviews. It's quite rare for a publication to have a substantive letter section that isn't filled with fluffy prose of praise [such as the above maybe?—b]. Way to go.

When I lived in New Orleans I was involved with music in just about every way except playing it (it seems I am tone deaf and have the rhythm of a flat foot w/ two left feet). As far as recording goes I was involved in a few projects. In New Orleans we were blissfully ignorant of Cassette Culture and thus, when we wanted to record something, we did it with making a record in mind. I was involved in producing a song called "Hey There (Meat Market Airhead)," our dance club parody; and "Pit Bulls on Crack," a pop politics kind of anthem. "Hey There" actually got out on a 7". "Pit Bulls" was made into a CART and named "Song of the Year" at the college station I worked at. Despite numerous offers to release it as a single, the guy who wrote and recorded it never did it— even tho it was supposedly being bootlegged and played in dance clubs in NYC and elsewhere. Also, we did an industrial rap, using sounds from work for beat, etc. called "Kinkoid Rap" [Brian works for Kinkos—b.] but that is still on a four-track recorded cassette somewhere.

As far as cassette culture goes— do you (all or just you or whatever) totally eschew other forms of recorded material? It seems that ignoring a record just because it is a record is contrary to what an enlightened alternative person/group/ work should be aiming for. Substance, not style,

is what counts, regardless if you wear a mohawk, a suit, or a calculator. I like to say, "deeds not words," and try to live it, like the movie, *You Gotta Do the Right Thing*. Prejudice against records or whatever is just that: Prejudice.

Building a better now,
Brian Wayson
San Francisco, CA

Personally, no, I don't eschew other forms of recorded material. Actually, it's next to impossible to do so. We're all constantly bombarded with mass-appeal music, be it on TV, in elevators, in grocery stores, at the dentist or wherever the radio dial might wander. But even given this fact, I don't ignore everything that mass-appeal music has to offer. There are some artists doing great work, and others I simply enjoy for enjoyment's sake.

But you see, Brian, it's for Enlightenment and Substance that I find myself turning to Cassette Culture more and more. The fact that, as I type this, I have over 100 unlistened-to cassettes staring me in the face is certainly a big part of this. But the fact becomes ever more clear, with every tape I listen to, that mass-appeal music does not (by its very nature, I think), for the most part, offer the kind of Enlightenment and Substance that independent recordings, not bound by the constraints of budgets and contractual obligations and life-on-the-road and all that other bullshit mass-appeal music finds so necessary, do offer.

And, whereas, mass-appeal music is usually less than just music, Cassette Culture is more... it's a network that exists in order to

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OUR COMPILATION
L.P. IN THE SPRING!



7 WOODSEND PL. ROCKVILLE, MD. 20854

exchange ideas. How many times have you personally discussed the intricacies of creative recording with artists toiling for *The Machine*? How many times have they even heard what you had to say? In *Cassette Culture*, we've faced the fact that mass-appeal music often does nothing more than spoon-feed us regurgitated pap—and that's not what we want. We want to create in an atmosphere that is totally open to creativity; and, rather than dish out the products of such creativity, we want to exchange it for other products borne of the same nature, in the same atmosphere.

If this is prejudice, so be it. I am not a sponge—I choose to be selective. I demand that my music be independent of every consideration. I demand that it be free of ties that have absolutely nothing to do with the music itself. And, quite often, *Cassette Culture* meets these demands.

And so, *The Now is built*—I, for one, choose to live in it now.
Bryan—

How ya doing? Thanks for the response to my recent letter. What can I say? Except that I feel you missed or ignored the point. My point was not to promote the validity of "mass-appeal" music—I don't even like or listen to what I call commercial music. I was talking about what one would call alternative or progressive or (god forbid) indie. I'm not talking about U2 or Madonna or Prince. There are some good records/recording/CDs out there that should not be ignored because they aren't cassettes. I believe this attitude is as bad as that attitude of Top 40 radio—it's pre-judging something before you ever hear it. How can an Lp, single, whatever that is pressed in 500 or 1000 or 2500 be "mass-appeal"? It's not—it's generally intended for a small segment of the population and many bands that have records out would welcome success, but not at the expense of the work. I feel qualified to say this 'cause I was involved with commercial free Radio, non profit booking agencies, copying band flyers for free, volunteer recording activities and writing for a music magazine, etc. And have a number of friends who are musicians. You really believe that cassettes are totally independent? An unchecked ego can be worse than limited studio time due to "budget constraints." I get cassettes—some are good, some so-so and some are nothing more than audio masturbation. Some records are good, some are shit—how do you know before you listen to them? You don't! I have no quarrel with GAJOOB being a cassette magazine—mags like GAJOOB are essential for the dissemination of information. But I gathered from your comments in the letters section that you had a bias against other mediums and this is what I have problems with. Cost-wise, a thousand CDs are cheaper than 1000 Lps, but, historically, CDs have been more expensive and thus stay that way—much like Regular and Unleaded gas. If Radio plays independent music is it not

then "mass-appeal" music? Thank for listening, and keep up the good work.

Brian Wayson
San Francisco, CA

Your points are well-taken, Brian. Except, I'm surprised to learn that the cost of manufacturing Lps is higher than CDs. Last time I checked (which was probably almost a year ago, to be honest with you) Lps were costing around \$1500/1000 and CDs were costing around \$3000/1000.

Just between you and me (heh heh), I do happen to like some commercial music. I even like some blatantly commercial music. It's the commercials I don't seem to have the stomach for.

And, while I realize there are literally tons and tons of alternative bands doing very worthwhile work on Lp and CD.... at the same time I do have a bias against those media, because of the impersonal nature of them. At this point in time, you can't make them one at a time. They're not made in response to a single person's

for patronization. That, simply because it is created and distributed on cassette, it is somehow substandard and hardly worth any serious consideration.

I agree that there is both good and shitty stuff coming from both sides, i.e., that as far as the work itself is concerned, there is no difference (although I believe the personal nature of cassettes implies a certain difference). Maybe the bias you imply from my response to various letters is simply a reaction to the fact that few people seriously agree with that.

Bryan Baker (!) -

Here's some tapes 4U! Gosh! I'm a recording artiste from New Jersey and everything! I've got 98 tapes, only includin' solo tapes! All together, includin' collab, compilations, and other artistes, I've got about 218 tapes! I'm reissuin' the entire Bovine Productions catalog—or cow-talog!

And that's what's happening!

No reason to worry,
Dan Floretti
Highland Park, NJ



Dear Bryan,

Thanks for another issue of GAJOOB. This zine is sure getting big. I'll send you all of *Nightshade* when it is done. Those three songs came out of about 40 experiments—the first I have ever done on 4-track. I'd like to make *Nightshade* very consistent in texture like any work as a whole—get the whole thing to sound "steady" like you said. Maybe even have the lyrics tell a story or have the whole thing "seamless" using speed control. If I get some cash I might get one of those samplers I see around, as right now I tape my sounds live or I use one of those micro cassettes which I bought at a garage sale. I have a Sears "Silverstone" amp circa 1966 with heavy vibrato—a true classic for \$5. Anyways, this debate over cassette culture? Folk music of the 21st century? The open road to the open mail? Moody to GAJOOB? Broken bottle slides to beat up tapes?

Take care,
David
Vancouver, BC, CANADA

request. And, for the most part, you simply don't get the sort of one-to-one exchange that you so often get with cassettes and the culture behind them.

I also realize that I allow a sort of missionary-like zeal to permeate my espousal of independent cassettes as a valid form of expression. My personal excitement just doesn't allow me to squelch it. And I don't think I ever want to come to the point where my zeal is squelched. If it bothers you, I'd just say, "Bear with me."

You see, there are tons of publications that focus on independent Lps and CDs. Some of these will even mention independent cassettes. But it always seems to be in passing, and with not a little bit of patronization. I began publishing GAJOOB because I refused to accept the idea that my own work was fodder

Dear Bryan,

Have just spent the past couple of hours reading GAJOOB #4 and found it to be highly interesting and enjoyable. I really appreciate your enthusiastic review of the "Brain Pain Sampler." I worked hard at compiling the tape and it's great to get a positive review. Most of the Australian bands on the cassette would never have dreamed their music would ever be heard in Salt Lake City unless they were as big as Bon Jovi or something, let alone, unsigned!

Cameron Craig
San Francisco, CA

GAJOOB #5



PAGE 9

Dear Bryan—

You're right, there is a good amount of self-indulgence in the cassette field, but that's good, in a way; it means there are no boundaries, no restrictive pseudo-academic rules which so easily hamper the free play of imagination. Universities and Colleges, which specialize in codifying rules in various disciplines, are for Engineering and Economics majors—not artists. Naturally, artists need to absorb a certain amount of raw information about the technical aspects of their discipline, but true artists don't need pop quizzes to learn them. Of course, not having rules and regulations in our field does lead to a degree of artistic license, but it's really up to the individual artist to avoid that. God knows I've done plenty of self-indulgent (and hence, artistically invalid due to it's not taking into account the potential dissatisfaction of even the smallest and most specialized audience) garbage, but that's a tendency all artists come across, and must eventually discard. It's an ongoing struggle and we all make errors of judgement: I know I do, now and then.

Best—
Tom Furgas
Youngstown, OH

I'm assuming here that your comments are in response to my initial reactions about cassette culture artists at the time I first became aware that it even existed. Reactions which I wrote about in Issue #4's letters column to Dino DiMuro. Note that those were initial reactions, Tom.

As my tape library grows close to 500, realizing that this isn't even a drop in the proverbial bucket in terms of the quantity of tapes out there, I feel I can make a rather educated evaluation of the culture in terms of self-indulgent tendencies, et al. Self-indulgence is not the problem— it's actually quite a significant part of the beauty of the culture that people can do what they want, errors in judgement included. Something which you alluded to in the above letter.

It's actually been very illuminating to me personally that in corresponding with various people whose work in taping I might not personally enjoy, I find that just about every single one of these people hold as strong a conviction about their own work as I do about mine. Our ideals may be quite opposite, but our motivations are very similar.

As far as regulations go, I think it should be obvious from my responses to other letters, not to mention GAJOOB as a whole, that they hold absolutely no place for me in the culture.

Just to set the record straight.

Hi Bryan,

Thank very much for your GAJOOB #4, I like it very much. I love the lots of mc-reviews, and the x - xxxxx is absolute great for me because my english is not so good.

Yes, the kids are ok, they are both very active, if you know what I mean.

Best wishes and see you with GAJOOB 5.

Matthias Lang
IRRE Tapes
West Germany

Hey Bryan—

Jeez, guess it takes a fire lit under my tail to finally write you and tell you how much I've been enjoying GAJOOB. Even stole a quote from it ("Mr. Cobra" proverb) for my catalog and listed you in my contact addresses.

It's been satisfying to watch your 'zine grow— and from issue #1 it's been fun, too. I keep meaning to let you know that, but I am lazy and swamped. Do you know, you're one of my first tape-network contacts? That's cool.

Heather Perkins
Land-O-Newts
Eugene, OR

Dear Bryan,

Hark! Thanks for the 'zine.

Yeah—about your "Stoopid World News" you really shouldn't eat raw fish, 'cause you could get a nasty cestode that I forget the name of. Well, take care, and invest in 8-tracks.

Fish and anarchy,
Katrina Kelly
Decapitated Catfish
Earlville, NY

Bryan—

What a peachy little mag. Second only to Factsheet Five, if I may say so [I won't stop you], except more focused and full of humor and fun stuff. Kind of made my spine tingle. Your outlook and attitude is quite fair and quite open and, well, "warm." I haven't read such honest and believable reviews of anything for a long time. My review of your reviewing is a @!

So, included herein is *Jungle of Noise*. To be honest with you, I did/still do this on a whim, and though I was sure other people must be doing it, I didn't realize it was so large a movement (or a movement at all). My tape is obviously amateur, I do them for fun. Some the material is self-generated (organ, harmonica, poetry, etc.) and the rest of the stuff I am only claiming credit to the collage aspect of it. I'm happy to have you review it, I don't know if I rank up there with the bands or the more professional sort of compilers, but what the heck. I think it's such an open-slate-kind-of-medium, there is so much to do. I am glad to have people to write to now who may be interested in my stuff, and who may read your zine and be interested in my stuff.

It must be tough reviewing tapes because I'm sure everybody thinks what they're doing is right. God, how can there be "good" and "bad" when it's so alternative a field? And how to keep opinion aside while deciding if a tape is good or bad? Yeees, what a task. If I may say so again, you handle it all very well.

Did I make it into the letter column yet? Heh. The publication reviews are a nice additive and the poetry and illos give such a witty touch to the whole package. Glad to be a part of the revolution.

Kim Kauffman
Neshanic, NJ

Dear GAJOOB Magazine,

How wonderful to hear about a cassette culture rag! My life evolves around my basement studio and my cassette only releases, so you guys are an oasis to me. I'm sending the two reviews I have so far of my first tape. You guys are the first mag to get "Fuzzy Logic"—I'll bet

you feel honored. I hate being pegged as "former member of this and that" cuz my old band is history. I'm totally solo now. If you can send me your most recent issue (in exchange for the tapes?) I know I'm scamming you—what can I say? I have NO SHAME!

Michael Bowman/Black Tulip
Formerly of....ahem, never mind
Nutley, NJ

Dear Bryan Baker,

A while ago (last year) I sent either one or two tapes to you— *Friend For Life* is my first tape, *Offspring* my second. I can't recall what I sent. My name is Bob Zander. You evidently read a review in Sound Choice or Factsheet Five and asked me to send one or both tapes. I'm writing to inquire about the status of my tape(s).

Many people write asking for tapes, and it would be good if I heard from at least half of these people again. Well, Bryan? Is a review in the works? Did you like the tapes(s)? I'm a bit bugged because I produce these tapes myself (and it really does take a good deal of time, effort and money, all mine), and then I send them off to people who want them free (which is understandable, if something happens), and mostly I never hear from them again. It's maddening and depressing. So enlighten me, Bryan, what's the word? Both tapes are solid efforts, perhaps especially *Offspring*. I honestly believe (and not just because I was so involved in it) that this tape deserves some attention. The little press it has received has been unanimously positive, not that GAJOOB has to agree. But I do think you should cover it, and then please send me one (or three) copies of the review. Thanks.

Yours,
Bob Zander
Minneapolis, MN

I do understand your frustration, Bob. One of the reasons I started publishing GAJOOB is this very same frustration at feeling that magazines that seemed to address independent recording and cassettes didn't really address the people (and the people behind independent tape labels too) who create them. Believe me when I say that this is not the case with GAJOOB. That people like yourself who create music independently are the whole reason for its existence.

But you also have to understand that there are certain realities involved in publishing— at least there are certain ones in my case. You see, I have to face life also. I work full-time so that I can pay rent, food, etc. (Not that there is much left over for etc's after rent and food are dealt with). GAJOOB is what I do after work. I would like to be more responsive. I would like to seriously correspond with a lot of the people who send me things; but most of my spare time is consumed in just keeping track of those things. I would like to send every one a copy of the magazine. I'm quite proud of it, actually. I just can't afford to. This is the reality of the situation. A reality which has taken me this long to get a grasp on. I'll be caught up with reviewing the tapes by the time the next issue rolls around. I'll just ask for you to be extremely patient until then.

I also record (at home, on 4-track cassette, incidentally). At least, I used to. I actually haven't had much time to do that because I believe in this magazine so much right now. I realize that since you're holding these printed words in your hand, and the paper they're printed on seems fairly inanimate, that it's very possible to assume that GAJOOB is inanimate also. But I'm sitting here in the bedroom of my cold apartment, drinking my fifth cup of coffee at 1:30 a.m. with letters and log books and magazines and proof sheets and lyrics and tapes strewn on my bed and spilling onto the floor. There's a pile of dishes in the sink that desperately need to be washed. Someone next door just turned on the water. And there's a girl in my life whom I would very much like to be holding onto right at this moment after spending the past three hours talking to her on the phone..... Also understand that there are two tapes that I received on November 6, 1989 from one Bob Zander, one of which I've listened to and enjoyed very much; and both of which, among the hundreds of others I've received, I sincerely appreciate getting because they're what make this whole magazine possible. I'm very serious about that. And about this magazine also.

But PhotoStatic says my editorial statements tend towards the overly-serious, so I guess I better quit before I'm overcome.

Dear Bryan,

My compliments on GAJOOB — a wonderful magazine, and an essential one at that; the potential of the cassette culture for producing highly personal art is surfacing quickly as vinyl sinks into obsolescence.

I run an established radio program down here in which I try to dig up music which generally unfit for ordinary "progressive" radio consumption. I devote a third or so of the show to music from the underground cassette world in the "off-center" vein, i.e., whatever will provide listeners with an idea of what creative musicians

are capable of creating unhampered by the corporate influences of the music industry. I respond to all tapes I receive and I provide listeners with ordering information and related artists. I also pass along tapes to other specialty (hardcore, metal, jazz, psychedelia, etc.) programs which play the music also.

College Radio can be an important outlet for independent music exposure and distribution — underground musics no longer pressed to vinyl must now exert their energy on the receptive College Radio audience directly, bypassing the channels of record company marketing. Most College Radio stations have announcers who are or may be receptive to cassette culture music if your tape reaches the right ears. I'd suggest writing/speaking to Music or Program Directors and Head Announcers about finding D.J.'s themselves who are or would be enthusiastic about the music — since independent tapes aren't governed by Payola (free records or airplay, which must be accounted for by the business department of the station), you can avoid being tossed on a pile of CD's, records, and tapes if you can deal directly with the announcers who are likely to get into and play your music.

The possibilities for cassette culture as an independent network are really enhanced by College Radio airplay if we all get involved and fill the "vinyl gap" with personalized networks that get the right music to the right listeners and back again.

Good luck with the magazine, and with the ongoing effort to make tape music work.

Yours,

Arlen P. Speights
Something Else
Baton Rouge, LA

Hello Bryan,

GAJOOB's the best tape-zine around the world in the moment. Very interesting is the interview with Dino.

Claus Korn
Individual Pop
West Germany



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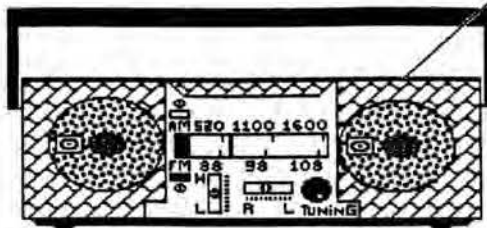
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Radio!



The **RADIO!** section lists various stations and/or programs which play independent cassettes.

CKUT-FM in Montreal, c/o Christof Migone, PO Box 203, Place du Parc, Montreal, QC, H2W 2M9, CANADA, plays cassettes.

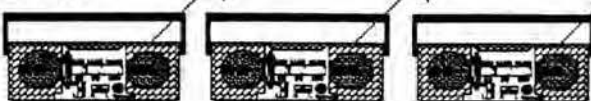
WFMU 91.1 FM, Upsala College, East Orange, NJ 07019, plays cassettes. David Newgarden is the music director. Their phone number is (201) 266-7901.

PSYCHIC RALLY, c/o baby doll, PO Box 2305, 5001 Aarau, SWITZERLAND, is a monthly radio show on the alternative radio station LoRa in Zurich, Switzerland. **PSYCHIC RALLY** contains experimental forms of expression, spoken works, musique concrete, noise, industrial, sound investigation and all kinds of strange sounds.... They send a copy of the show in which your work appears.

WEVL FM90, PO Box 40952, Memphis, TN 38174, features Mystery Hearsay International every Saturday at 10pm. It's hosted by Mike Honeycutt of the Mystery Hearsay Cassettes label. Mike plays experimental electronic music from all over, so send him something.

Krapp's Last Tape, c/o Luigi, WCSB 89.3 FM, Cleveland State University, Rhodes Tower Rm. 956, Cleveland, OH 44115, phone: (216) 687-3523, devotes a half hour every Wednesday at 10:00 p.m. to showcasing Cassette Magazines and experimental poetry cassettes from around the world.

The Eugene Electronic Music Collective has members that host two shows on KLCC 89.7 FM in Eugene which feature electronic music. Their catalog states that they're "... always looking for new music to air." Address: EEMC, PO Box 3219, Eugene, OR 97403; and KLCC, 4000 E. 30th Ave., Eugene, OR 97405.



The (Intentional) Fallacy of Segregation

Behind every petulant whine about "heritage" lies someone who irrationally believes the outcome of the 'Tower of Babel' incident to have been a good thing. They don't get it: race is irrelevant - because IT DOESN'T MATTER what color is under the sheets.

Racism - whether it's manifested in psuedo-skinhead nausea or the inane antics of terrorist rap pinheads like Public Enemy, or in the public access version of Dial-a-Nazi or PBS' "Tony Brown's Journal" - is one of society's most openly despicable methods of operation... the attempted separation of human beings on the basis of superficial characteristics, by little despots who are themselves superficials.

It's all relative. The surest way to abolish racism is to abolish the cesspool that spawned it: society.

The Anti-Socialist Party
P.O. Box 523
Columbia Station, OH
44028-0523



For further reference: "Ebony and Ivory" by Paul McCartney,
"How to Relax Your Colored Friends at Parties" by Lenny Bruce,
"Controversy" by Prince and anything by George Clinton.

Robin James

INTERVIEW

The following interview took place via the mails in early January, 1990.

Robin James is the impetus behind Cassette Mythos, a sort of networking organization that seems devoted to providing some sort of basis for the cohesion of all the diverse networking groups in audio, video, radio, etc.

Who is Robin James?

Who is Robin James? So far there are four of us that I know of, one who lives in Lacey, Washington, he is a retired military guy who now has a construction company. I got a couple of calls for him from old army buddies, drunk, late at night. We talked for a while, but I've never contacted the guy in Lacey. The other I met when I first moved to Seattle, she lived in the same building as I, when I was moving in she noticed the mailing address on some boxes I had. We were to meet once more for cookies but haven't yet, we've both moved. She's gotten some calls for me. The third Robin James is an illustrator of children's books. I got a call for her once too. She lives in L.A. I think.

I was born in 1956 and am back in school after many years of serious goofing off. Studying Library and Information Science which I could go on and on about but won't, leaving it at this: my specific interest seems to be in media archiving. My peculiar revolution would be to treat audio cassettes as a major resource of local history and folk-art (especially things like local music programs, old people telling stories, etc.) and house them with duplication equipment. You bring a blank tape to the Library and fill it up. The flaw of course is that audio cassettes last about ten years max, then they seem to disintegrate. Well, the ones that were made ten years ago are disintegrating now, maybe the newer ones will be around longer. Better storage will be necessary to follow through with the local history idea thing.

My childhood was just like anyone else's, I grew up in a diverse community that included college brats like myself, and steel worker's kids who had very different frames of reference. I wanted to stay at home summers rather than have to get shots and fly back to Europe. My first experience with a cassette recorder was to read comics out loud, adding generous (but primitive, mostly vocal) sound effects, and to tape record a train. This was in 1965 or so. After that, a period of audio cassette dormancy followed which lasted until 1978 when I was making sound effect programs to accompany a performance duo, wearing all black clothing including a hood and black gloves and using props like masks and dolls to tell stories. I wandered into KAOS-FM in the late spring of 1982, reading poetry with sound collages and effects and experimenting with radio theater, staying there until 1987 when I moved to Seattle to work for Muzak. Taping sound effects led to fussin' around with a guitar, which led to going electric and making reel to reel tape loops of guitar sounds. This led to playing guitar-like instruments (strange slack tunings and harmonics) climaxing in 1984 when I got a computer and stopped playing guitar completely.

My own work (besides being a painter and steelware and porcelain engineer [dishwasher] and a blueprint titler and an unemployed failure-loser went from film making and experimental puppet theater to playing guitar to using this very same computer all the time. Next will probably be a fully-equipped UFO, with new hallucinogenic projections. For now though, it's Liberry Skool morning noon and night, all the time. Next will be lots of sound-related work I hope (if wishes were fishes).

Outside of networking I go to school and work at two part time jobs, working at the university media center and as a film researcher, both for lunch money. I spend lots of time waiting and thinking about what I want to eat. I love to watch Adams Family or Perry Mason, Granny n' Jed, even Gilligan little buddy, but alas it just doesn't work out very often.

Separating networking from daily life is wise and in my case necessary. For the most part no one that I come across can cope with strange sounds. My networkin' buddies that I see are few and far between. Even when I lived in Olympia and did a radio show every week and hung around with producing artists there was precious little feedback. The rare times that I have tried to share the Audio Alchemy Digest tapes with anyone at the University here have all been very painful. "Just shut it off, I can't listen to it." "Interesting idea, good that you're doing it. Let's try the radio now."

My other interests are all very small but they outweigh cassette networking easily. They have to do with food and activities, sometimes I look for work (hate it), mostly I like to sit around and stare without moving. Or go for walks in the wilderness. Sleeping too much seems to be my most dependable secret desire.

Robin at Muzak

I had two jobs at Muzak, as a Motherer in the Production department, preparing tapes of the classic elevator "main channel" for satellite broadcast over the entire planet. I got some wild distorted shit over the system once or twice and STILL talked my way out of it as being "an accident." My biggest little contribution to the world. In elevators and bank lobbies all over the planet there was strange crunching and grinding for three continuous minutes. The funniest story they had about problems was an automation tone being audible which sounds just like the fire alarm signal, imagine banks and shopping malls on a huge scale erupting in pandemonium — evacuate! Then I moved into programming and was a Sub-Masterer until I promoted

myself abruptly after being there 18 months, getting a good taste of that situation, the ultimate and original corporate sound utility. A wired radio. Programming was going through a major revolution, expanding into "foreground" music (73 different formats on tape, things like lite rock, new age, heavy metal, baroque, Broadway musicals, Chinese dinner music, etc.) in addition to the background ("main channel") stuff. But wait — this has nothing to do with my childhood, really.

Networking

I had never thought much about networking, it just seemed to be the natural product of having all those addresses around from Op. We made a huge index of all the issues but it never was published. There was a zine-thing called Testtube which had a great mother-load of addresses — I wonder what ever happened to them.... They seemed to be bigger networkers than Op was, but with less expansive discussion. Later I came across Factsheet Five which sets the pace, breaking open new counter-culture newsletters/mutation cults. Overall, the more the better. Everyone has a specialization and way of filtering the world they come across, presenting nuggets from what they find. All the well equipped and prolific tape artists taking the initiative to try new things, there is more music being documented than ever before imagined.

My first involvement in the cassette networking was putting the various reviews together in distributor order. It started with writing reviews of cassettes that had arrived at Op for Graham Ingels to review in his column Castanets. It all started with Shockability for me.

Exactly what keeps me motivated to remain involved in networking is an interest in following through with this thing, whatever it is. I haven't given up on my original premise of making a book about using a tape recorder and mail box to explore incredible things. Other things come up. I am kinda moving into less cassette-specific areas these days, but I do keep the Cassette Mythos in my pocket, handy.

The networking process starts with obtaining material to listen to and possibly even appreciating some small discovery on a compilation. Then investigating the situation, possibly contacting the artists, possibly contacting the source of the compilation tape itself, to obtain more music (or whatever) from the true sources. It can also begin with an artist having a tape of original stuff who would like to be heard. It involves making copies of these original tapes and making them available. This is a hand-crafted type activity, the entire process can be very compact and efficient, you manufacture only a component of the necessary whole picture, the promotion arm, production wing, talent belly, distribution isn't all that hard to do, everyone needs it but no one does it well. Tradition unfortunately is that distributors promote and actually sell your art and then are often unable to pay you regularly. This is not true by any means of all distributors, it's just a rough job (everyone has very high expectations and can be extremely enthusiastic, then grouchy and accusing when the tapes don't sell right away). the best set-ups I've seen are RRRecords and Missing Link, but it's a rough job to put up with and there have been some valiant efforts.

Anyway, back to the networking process, there are many ways to use this information and there are so few rules or even instructions. The major objectives are to collect new stuff you like and to have your own stuff heard by the listeners that will

appreciate it. A major thing to watch out for is expecting to make any kind of money at this, and I mean make enough to cover expenses. There are cassette artists that do sell lots of their product for lots of money, well-known specialty items work well. They need record stores or even stores that sell health food or skate board shops to do it, but unknown persons working at home like us probably don't have that kind of opportunity. So we can swap amongst ourselves. No recovery of postage and blank tape (buy the good stuff in bulk) but no big price that you may not like all that much anyway. Most of all remember that there are no rules, you can try new things if you are careful and work with simple honesty and straightforwardness and trust instead of schemes that involve high stakes and looting. You know what I mean.

The best way, in my opinion, to become involved in networking is to look around in related magazines that have things you like in them, cassette reviews in music 'zines or popular culture type stuff, and sift out a few addresses of stuff you think may sound interesting. Respond to a few by writing to them (a SASE may be mentioned in the source you find, or a specific amount of money (\$5 or so), or maybe they want a tape of your own, etc.) and see what happens. Having done things like this over the years I know that people have varying attitudes about prompt responses. Usually they come through, sometimes they moved away long ago, or they lost your letter and just now found it, perhaps they are traveling, or have a new job (that's happened to me — I couldn't answer all the letters for a whole year) some are in business and want to serve you perfectly, some are doing just what they decide to have time to do. One or two get pissed at something. A few more may let you know they like what you do.

The people with whom I am networking with are extraordinary persons that take a very active role in creating their own best possible worlds in many ways. Some have very disconnected situations that don't cross over between their regular daily grind and their capstan adventures. Some are very lucky and effortlessly combine them in fantastic ways. It's all a matter of attitude and personality type, situation and using the opportunity properly.

My very favorites are people I've met that I like or that somehow came into my path, by true serendipity or not, that make sound theater or collages or emotive performances that happen to strike my fancy at the moment. Those are the ones that I like. Unusual sounds and collages. Like with Jackson Pollack's controversial style, there are things that work and things that don't work, but I like the genre effort. Music can be interesting too, but more often than not it does not satisfy my entertainment needs, my threshold of stimulation. I have favorite pop songs that I have periods of infatuation with, like everyone else, but most radio doesn't entertain my jaded ears for long. News is my typical choice of available broadcasts.

What is Cassette Culture?

Cassette Culture is the community that somehow builds up from using cassette recordings in certain ways. You play a cassette that you get in the mail and it unleashes some kind of environment hallucination that can be controlled (volume, location of playback, rewind and play again, etc.) Cassettes seem to work by freezing bits of time. This enables the manipulation and analysis of sound phenomena as coded sonic information. There are lots of styles and reasons for making recordings, including documentation and artistic expression. A major subculture that enjoys new or just plain strange sounds to hear has begun to develop new

resources. And get their Ya-ya's out. A Cassette Culturist is a pioneer in this new folk art frontier. But geeze, that's sort of an awkward use of the words Cassette Culturist by some standards. Maybe there is a better term than Cassette Culturist. How about Electronic Artist? Producer/Consumer? Naw, let's go back to Cassette Culturist.

The culture itself has changed and evolved in a number of ways, now there are more established venues for specific styles, the seeds are in place, more and more people are beginning to understand the good things that can come in the mail using the right strategies, and that they can be heard on some radio programs around the world simply by sending their tape to the right place.

The current state of Cassette Culture is Expansive.

What is missing are more cool magazines like GAJOOB and ND and Electronic Cottage and Sound Choice and Maximum RocknRoll. We need more sound magazines, things you get every few weeks or months that you listen to, music, poetics, theatrical stuff, sound effects. I have very high hopes for Ariel (not sure of Spelling) that Steve Peters/What Next?/Non Sequitur [PO Box 16467, Santa Fe, NM 87506-6467] is making. Tellus and Soundworks are the most successful of this genre, but they are both looking for more grants and funding.

The future of Cassette Culture. More sophisticated home publishing and specialized trade fairs. A conference or localized area audio arts networker gathering events like the Swamp Fest, would be a fun thing to go to every year or so. More home publishing models are needed. The subject matter is unlimited, it encourages gathering and analyzing material in creative new ways.

In a perfect world, one would come to check the mail, find a new little package, look at it and place it into the playback device, listen to it while performing routine chores. Later, head on over to the studio corner and work on the current projects, maybe something recently heard has made a difference and provides a new part of a wide variety of experiences that have

nothing to do with each other, other than maybe humming a little tune through the day, at the farm, lab, office or gymnasium.

To newcomers I would introduce the idea of tape compilation, and that they could make something that would go onto a compilation, they could make a compilation themselves if they have all the necessary resources (most musicians have everything you need) I think that compilation tapes are the most interesting things to listen to.

Cassette Mythos

Cassette Mythos is about the different kinds of things that have been done using the device, what you can do with them now, and somehow it should be about who is doing what too. Sort of a sonic chronical of the time, that might be a good mission for many projects.

My reasons for starting and my reasons for staying are different in scope, things were all wide open when it started, anything could happen, now the project is very limited, a collection of text and a bunch of different sound recording compilation experiments. Oh and the video thing too, more about the problems there to follow shortly.

Cassette Mythos and its related projects consist of:

1) the book, which will be published, Sue Ann Harkey is performing miracles with the visual experience, the text is pretty much all the way fixed. The book consists of ONLY THE ESSAYS, no reviews or addresses, the idea is to emphasize things that belong in a book, things that aren't as likely to change. Maybe things will get even better.

2) something will happen with the reviews. The networking list contains the stuff that is likely to constantly change over time. The most successful one was the last one, 1988. It has over 350 addresses listed alphabetically. At this time there are approximately 1000 contacts here. There is a new emphasis on specializations that exist, like radio broadcasters, traders, people that also work with video, or computers, or other applications (performance, slides), as well as compilation projects underway and catalog mentions. This is going to require a new

format, and a budget. There was a big problem with both of these, but we would like to take on the challenge.

3) the sound sampler concept, in the long run we expect to work within a radio-friendly format providing little self-interview bits with actual sonic art sample illustrations. The 90 and 60 minute format seems less likely to work than a 5 or seven minute adventure, something that could be dropped into a radio magazine easily.

There is a compact disk that nears completion, my role was to invite participants from the Cassette Mythos files, for the purpose of exhibiting in two minutes or less, and Ean White has done the rest — selecting from the contributions and executing the mastering. We hope Randal Hunting will create packaging and there it will be, a compact disk of underground sound arts.

4) the video project has reverted into an embryonic state, the addresses grow cold I fear, the first cassette did indeed make the circuit through. Now I need to assemble a list of willing participants and prepare the sequence, then purchase the tape and dispatch it, with letters to each of the participants indicating that it is starting. The first one has stopped at the final assembly and duplication stage, it is much more expensive and difficult than I thought.

I started Cassette Mythos just to see what would happen if I tried it.

The status of the book is that the entire process, starting in 1985 has turned out to be taking much much longer than imagined. It is something that costs money, I pay for most of it but the final cost of making the book and compact disk are both not costing me and not paying me directly. But it will be completed.

Finally

My current status is much more confused than I have hoped, caught between what seems like an obviously easy and successful project and known value of this resource, which is very nill. Traditionally this kind of information is value-less because no one knows what to do with it, or does anything with it.

Robin James may be reached at 1106 First Ave. West, Seattle, WA 98119.

Readers' Choice Tapes

I received a letter from AGOG very close to publication that contained his list of favorite cassettes. He suggested I print other's favorites also. I think it's a great idea! So here's the first installment of what I hope will be a regular feature. As with everything else in GAJOOB, please feel free to contribute.

AGOG's Favorite 16 Cassettes

In no particular order

Kenandall • How to Be Alive in 3 Easy Lessons/Blatant Insinuation [ZIDSICK]

This is a really amazing cassette with many prominent folks of the cassette world mixed in (Mino, Dave Prescott, Barry Edgar Pilcher, Mick Tetrault, etc.). And Ken Clinger's superb keyboard playing is featured throughout. All put together by mix master Zan Hoffman of Ziblick. Difficult to describe, very beautiful and subtle. Excellent use of found vocals. Electronics and noise are never overpowering, but flow nicely in and out of pieces. A well-organized and organic work. I've listened to this cassette more than any other in my collection (which numbers over 200 tapes).

Morphogenesis • [Sound of Pig]

I find this cassette of experimental music more interesting to listen to than a lot of experimental albums. I believe their music is mostly improvised live. The instrumentation of this group of a half dozen individuals includes metal percussion, prepared guitar, violin, water, shortwave radio, plus one member listed as being a "sound projector" who I believe mixes everything during performances. Their sound is very textural; it flows beautifully like water.... It's obvious they have played together for a while, as they balance their sounds so well. One of my favorite groups ever.

Adam Bohman • Various Audio Letters

This Englishman (also a member of Morphogenesis) has sent me 2 audio letters that are among my most prized possessions. Basically, he is always carrying a cassette recorder with him and as he goes about his day, he speaks into it, describing what he is thinking, the area he happens to be in, etc. I know this sounds boring the way I'm describing it, but it's incredibly fucking interesting the way he does it! Also throughout he has excerpts of his excellent music (prepared violin, tape manipulation) or other related stuff. He usually does these amazing paintings on the cassette box with a variety of materials (they smell interesting too). I've never met him face to face, or even spoken to him on the phone, but I feel like I really know this dude. I am honored to be in contact with this genius.

Crisis in American Music • Volume 4 [Nar Bang/UTOT]

One of several groups on the Nar Bang/UTOT cassette label out of Alabama. They play improvised music using a variety of acoustic instruments/found objects with a bit of electronics (simple) used. Some parts are very percussive. Again, very textural music, and done with a distinct, collective, yet personal touch. Nar Bang/UTOT put out many tapes I enjoy. I was in personal contact with Bill McCandless, who ran the label, but he moved over a year ago and I've not heard from him since. Has seemingly disappeared off the face of the Earth.

Jack Wright • Assorted Treats [Spring Garden Music]

Jack's thing seems to be mostly live gigs. This tape collection of solo and group improvisations is excellent. He is a superb sax player, and his approach is like no one else's. He gets up there alone and can really hold his ground. Uses his voice much the way he approaches his saxophone.

Gregory Whitehead • Dead Letters [Art - Ear]

I've several cassettes by Gregory, and all of them are excellent. Gee, his work's hard to describe. He works with language. Here, off the box of the cassette: Cinema in the Head. That hits it ok. Very unique. Also some of the most professionally produced work I've heard and seen.

Onnyk • various tapes of his solo/group improvisations

I've several cassettes by this Japanese improviser, and with each one he tries different instruments and approaches, and succeeds in all. Sax, guitar, even an electronically processed shaver. My favorite

is of him playing a steel guitar using two volume pedals to weave the guitar in and out through different pedal effects. Also he's a very nice person who has turned me on to many interesting musicians from Japan and abroad.

John Wiggins • Anagenic

A master of musique concrete. One of the nicest balances of imagination and technology. He uses computers (I'm not really sure how) to sample sounds, and then re-organizes them into energetic, fragmented pieces. John really hones his work down to the best material before releasing. Constantly stimulating music. Very wild percussive parts. His work remains organic-sounding.

M. Reams • Heaven is Here [Sound and Fury]

I just received Murray's cassette, "Heaven is Here" two days ago, and already it's become a favorite. This tape features all percussive-type music. His playing is excellent throughout, as well as varied. He "hits" lots of different things to produce an array of fascinating timbres.

Dinosaurs With Horns • 1st [Solid Eye]

I think this, their first tape, is a classic. The sound quality, production and engineering are the best I've heard on cassette. A very careful group. They're difficult to describe—certainly experimental. A bizarre mixture of melodies, tape manipulations, found recordings, electronic keyboards, exotic rhythms and more. They create a personal atmosphere like no one else. Really, my words fail to describe this work of geniuses. Excellent cover (a color photo of a Rick Potts painting).

Health & Beauty • 1st [Vibrating Egg]

More bizarre music. Lots of violin, cello and "vocals" (people making some of the strangest sounds with voice I've ever heard), as well as various music with a sense of humor. The musicianship is outstanding, as well as the sound quality. Some of their music reminds me of Ligeti.

Widemouth Sampler • Various Artists [Widemouth Tapes]

Received this tape not so long ago so it's still just settling into my brain. Lots of people on this. Sound poetry to free improvised instrumentals and more. Very eclectic. I think this is a 90-minute compilation and it is one of the few that holds my interest all the way through.

Croiners • Music to Listen to Other Tapes By [Jim Tapes]

Jim (Croiners) was the 1st person to send me a really good cassette when I first got started in trading and networking (back in '85). "Music to Listen to Other Tapes By" is a carefully recorded montage of loops, found vocals and electronic keyboards.

Big City Orchestra • Carnival of Monsters [UBUIBI]

One of the best "noise" type of groups. "Carnival of Monsters" is my favorite of several excellent cassettes they have released. Good non-musical use of sampler. A lot of people try to pull off what BCO do, but it's rarely as successful.

Pierre Perret • Gaia La Terre [Lonely Whistle]

An excellent montage of found environmental sounds. Mostly a quiet and textural work. A very beautiful cassette.

Fredrik Knud Longberg Holm • The Carrying Out of Sanctions... [Collision]

His tape is also somewhat difficult to describe. First side has abrupt, fractured snippets of radio (I think) with a bit of reverb to give some depth. Silence plays an important part in creating tension in this piece. It's simple, but very effective. Next is a multi-tracked cello piece (I think). It's hard to tell how it's being played. The final piece is somewhat similar to the 1st. Side 2, Fred uses drum machines in a very interesting way. Not as rhythm boxes, but instead he creates a series of pulsating textures.

Well there you have it. I think the main link between all these artists is an intense dedication to their work. Music/Art cassettes are far more than just a "hobby" to these people.

The Fine Art of Radio Distribution

by
Blair Petrie

Alex asked me to write something about the promotion of my last release (a cassette tape: Requested Music), which I haven't really done. I've just given a brief, basic outline of some of the main areas that should be covered in the promotion of an independent release and my experience in relation. As well as hoping to impart an *awareness* on the part of the musician/composer.

One of the main objectives, I suppose, is to garner radio play. As much as possible or no one will take you or your music seriously, especially the larger independent distributors. If you have a cassette-only release — give up. Still there? Oh well....

Life is horrible enough if you are an "independent" but if you insist on doing it on cassettes.... It's an entirely different thing. Assuming you want a little more than the basic ego gratification of seeing your name on a cover, you have to have as an objective getting enough people interested so you can eventually actually sell one or two and put a small dent in the payment of that which I'm about to tell you....

First of all, packaging. When sending your tape (or record) to radio stations remember, these people receive 250 releases of various sorts a week. Why should they notice yours? Why should they even open it!! Make everything as interesting and/or bizarre as your non-budget will allow. You've got to get their attention and then keep it. Include posters, reviews, quotes, photos, artwork, totally unrelated shit, anything, in the package. Give them something to look at, hold their attention whilst they listen to your release.

How many to send out? A lot. It hurts to give them away but it's better to have them in the hands of a radio station full of people or someone in some scene somewhere than in a box in your cupboard. I did about 135 of Requested Music. But remember to try and send it to someplace or someone where there is some chance of them liking it. Otherwise you may be throwing them away.

Once they get it how do you find out a) if they *did* get it b) will they play it? c) why? and countless other queries. This is a problem. Ideally, you spend all day everyday on the telephone, but as we're not WEA or Burce Allan this is a rather ridiculous (expensive) approach. I sent hate mail with return postage. It's amazing what an insult will motivate someone to do.... reply, play your fucking tape just to see what kind of an asshole you really are, maybe even take it all as a joke.... I sent little postcards along with return postage already on; about 60% replied. Not bad, really. If you don't give them any way to communicate — you might get a 10-15% reply of some sort, (unless you're DOA or *somebody* — which you're not. No one has ever heard of you, therefore you are *not* cool.) If you can think of other ways — do it! If it works let me know! (seriously, write Alex or me and we'll put it in the next CLEM). The biggest problem with radio stations is getting them things to try: send the most obvious playlistable song on a C-10 or a C-5 (easy to cue up), suggest that the station "cart" any piece or pieces they like (most stations have this ability), put the obvious songs or pieces at the beginning of each side of the tape, threaten them with death in a horrible manner....

Distribution. All the radio airplay in the world won't sell your tape unless people can buy it somewhere, somehow. This is the biggest headache. Mailorder distributors can sell a few (in the 10's and you're doing great). But really, you have to get them into stores in the area where the stations that do play your stuff broadcast, (and let the stations know where they can be had locally). The bigger "alternative," independent distributors won't touch you for two reasons (unless you're No. 1 at 250

stations) a) you are "unknown" and b) it's a cassette — for every one cassette sold they can sell 10 plus records. So, there really is no answer to this.

Get immediately to all the small distributors you can think of who may be interested in what you do (or just have neat names). Send the tapes on consignment (never expect cash up front — you're in the wrong line of work if you do — you're in the wrong dimension if you actually expect *money*) with as much promotional material as you can muster, (posters, bios, reviews, bullshit) I even sent them "payola" (a few dollars): if they like the tape, use it to buy something consoling, if they don't like it, use it to return the package. (10 tapes seems a reasonable number to send). Give them a deadline (word it nicely), 2-3 weeks to return it. If you haven't heard after 3+ weeks assume they have deemed you worthy of their attention and advertise like hell where people can get your release. You'll need 2000 arms and 12 brains plus a million bucks to coordinate all this.... Got any better ideas? Good, send them to me, immediately.

This is only a brief blurb to give you some ideas. If you do half this stuff you may sell 30-50 tapes. It will probably have cost you 30 times what you made to sell them. If something clicks (i.e., a "Hit") with the radio stations, you *could* probably sell a lot. I don't know how much a lot is. I don't know of anyone who has sold a lot with cassette tape-only releases. In fact, I don't know of anyone who has sold a lot with alternative independent records. It is if you like to lose large amounts of money it is. Promoting an independent, alternative, _____ (fit your descriptive cliché in here) release (read: product) is pretty well exactly like the mainstream establishment. The radio station stuff all works the same way. It all does. Most of the alternative radio stations are really anything but. They have Top 40 playlists, music directors, programme directors, some have certain obligations, some pander to certain labels, etc. There are "Hits." There are nationwide Top 40 playlists — take 50 "alternative" stations and chances are 45 of them have virtually the same playlist. Still there? Of course not *all* stations are like this and not *all* members of all stations are blindly following this route.

Quite often your music can be too alternative for the alternative stations. (Yes it is possible and happens regularly). So you must choose wisely when sending out promotional copies. Try and get as much information on the stations as possible. Playlists can sometimes be handy, although they can also be misleading. Maybe that's the only stuff the station gets sent, it doesn't show individual programmes which may play music that varies widely from the playlist, at some stations the playlist is not mandatory, merely a guide. You have to do some detective work. Check out alternative magazines, newsletters, other musicians, write stations, etc.

You must realize even in the "alternative" world people are narrow minded. Put a 2 minute "pop song" on a tape of industrial noise and guess what? You are a commercial pop musician or you've sold out. Do the opposite (which most likely won't apply here), put 2 minutes of industrial noise on a commercial pop record and the band or musician is "too fucking weird, man." This is not much of an exaggeration, if at all. I know, I've experience both attitudes.

Remember: always make it as easy as possible for people to do whatever it is you want: Radio stations, Distributors, fans (!)?, etc., to respond to you, listen to your tape or record, know who you are, contact you or your distributor(s), give out your address and/or telephone number to other people who are interested.... etc. If it isn't obvious, easy, laid out on the table, requiring absolutely no effort on their part, forget it, it won't be done. make it EASY. Blair Petrie is involved with CLAS, who distribute the Contact List of Electronic Music -- the 1986 updated version of which this article was a part. Cassette artists are listed in CLEM free of charge (just send them your tape and some info to: CLAS, PO Box 86010, North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 4J5.

They Eat Pianos, Don't They?

by Nyle Frank

Piano bars can be dangerous places. Once those pianos start drinking, there's no telling WHAT they're capable of doing (why do you think they call them "hoods"?). I just hope that a few innocent pianists can be saved with this

PIANO BAR SURVIVAL GLOSSARY

DEALING WITH CUSTOMERS: Be sure to inform them that, unless they use the same plate, it's bad form to make more than two trips per evening to the piano bar. I once played at one where, for \$5.95, folks could have Soup of the Day plus all the pianos they could eat. They really ate up my act!... I even got to do a few commercials for Ragu Piano Sauce. It's hard to beat dining with a little soft piano. Unfortunately, children are usually too young to have acquired a taste for piano. You can try feeding them pianobutter and jelly sandwiches (some of the older kids might even enjoy an extra crispy piano casserole), but sometimes you just have to tell them, "shut up and eat your spinets!"

THE FREE MEAL: If you plan to eat the piano, be sure and do it AFTER you play. I personally have no qualms about eating a fine grande, but I draw the line when it comes to eating helpless baby grandes. They are often kidnapped by the Pianostra at a tragically young age— and wheeled off to piano bars.

GROOMING: Being bald, this is no problem (I even do "Baldwin is Beautiful" commercials). Be sure, however, that there's no spaghetti dangling between your teeth (unless you're playing a song about food... or Italy).

PLAYING BY EAR: If you can do it, great! (Unfortunately, I've never been able to play well with mine). If you can accompany yourself with your ear drums, that's even better.

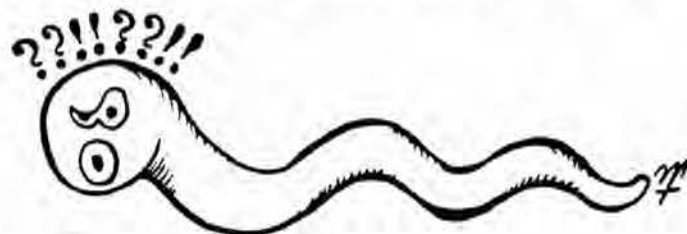
THE TIP JAR: Always a problem. Flashing pink and yellow lights look great, but they once electrocuted one of my best tippers. Once the jar was too narrow, and a customer got his hand stuck and walked away with it. My recommendation is to have people fill it up BEFORE you begin playing.... then make a run for it!

TIPS: The best tip I ever had came from a man who, after hearing me play for a few minutes, suggested I become a writer.

Nyle Frank is an independent recording artist who makes his home in Nashville. His Centipede Productions has a couple wonderful instrumental piano tapes in their catalog. Write: PO Box 121832, Nashville, TN 37212 for more info.



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STOOPID WORLD NEWS

Frustrated Roberto Suarez flagged down a passing motorist for directions and was dragged to his death when the driver held on to his gold chain and sped away.

A couple who chained their 15-year-old son to a chest of drawers because they didn't like his friends have been arrested and charged with kidnapping, police in Rossano, Italy, report.

A Labrador retriever, frightfully abused by its owner, Thomas Jubert, drowned him while the man was swimming in a lake. "The dog murdered the man as sure as I'm standing here," said Margaret Trexler. "...the dog really did put his paws on the man's shoulders and push down on him until he drowned."

A grown man was fined \$150 for karate-kicking a little 8-year-old girl in the stomach because she took his sunglasses.

Diane Kohutynski's property settlement with her husband, Leroy, stipulates that he must grant her regular visitation with Magic, the former couple's \$3000 pet cockatoo.

A woman on a life support system in her home died when a power company worker turned off her electricity, mistaking her for a deadbeat

who hadn't paid her bill.

A Tampa Fla., woman awoke to find a gun-toting man sitting beside her bed— but all he did was chat for more than three hours about his marital woes.

A black widow spider nearly killed a brawny construction worker by biting him on the penis. "I was screaming, yelling and begging for someone to help me, praying to God. The pain was so bad I wanted to die," said Robert Edington of Margate, Fla.

Russian psychic, Alexei Frenkel, who had successfully stopped bicycles and cars with his thoughts, was ground into hamburger under the wheels of a train when he stood on a track and tried to stop it with the power of his mind.

An old and crippled wife is accused of beating her hubby to death with her crutch. Stavroula Plexidas, 80, told police in Trikala, Greece, she didn't do it. She claims her husband, Nikolaos, 78, hanged his head falling out of bed.

Horrible miner Jose Rodo spent 13 days trapped in a collapsed mine shaft but survived the ordeal by eating the flesh of four dead pals. "It was the most hideous thing I've ever had to do," the heartsick Jose told

reporters in Cerro de Pasco, Peru. "They were my friends, you know."

A quiet church camp meeting turned bloody in a hurry when one aged worshiper slit another man's throat because he thought the man had drugged his Communion wine at a church service 10 years earlier.

Police in Mannington, W. Va., shot and killed two vicious pit bull terriers after the dogs tried to eat a 600-pound cow alive. "They just looked at us and let go of the cow and came for us."

A plant worker in Canton, Ohio, was fired because he kicked a vending machine that swallowed his 50 cents, but didn't cough up a cinnamon roll.

A divorced husband and wife, racing toward a romantic reunion, died tragically in the twisted wreckage of their cars — after they

collided head-on on a lonely stretch of road near the new house they had planned to share.

A chain-smoking lawyer kicked his cigarette habit after 30 years and choked to death on a piece of nicotine gum.

A former prisoner is suing the Polk County, Fla., jail for forcing him to eat 42 grilled cheese sandwiches in one week. Prison officials said the unidentified man was given the less messy sandwiches because he had been throwing his regular meals at guards and other inmates.

A stupid burglar stripped naked so he could squeeze through a vent into a Chinese eatery, and got stuck and froze to death.

A South African scuba diver barely escaped with his life during a terrifying underwater tryst with a lovesick hippo who had a crush on him. "It's mating season and he

thought I was his mate," said Wouter Brink.

A 22-year-old man blew his bean-eating buddy away with a .45 because the guy wouldn't stop breaking wind. Eduardo Valdez says he told his friend, Hector Barrera he would kill him if he didn't stop passing gas. "He didn't," said Valdez. "So I did."

Motorist Trevor Burton stopped to aid victims of a deadly school bus crash — and while he was gone, a thief stole his car.

A gabby bachelor died in a trailer fire — because he yapped with the emergency 911 operator until it was too late to escape.

Traveling thieves swiped Harry West's wooden lawn bunny — and eight months later returned the rabbit with 48 snapshots from a cross-country trip! The hop-scooting hare even had his picture taken with the Mayor of Baltimore, Kurt Schmoke.

Saturday Dancer

Words: Alda Pavletich

Music: Norma Tanega

\$10

Chrome Cassette

Norma Tanega

4111 Mt. Baldy Rd.

Claremont, CA 91711

Spoken Arts Audioworks from Addictive Audio

A short explanation of a new kind of oppression: Ideas administered by "Garbage" Police

by Bob Z

The wasteland. Cultural wasteland of 1980s, marked by idiot propaganda machine fear and irrelevant right-wing anti-drug campaign, television and void-of-humanity Ronald McDonald greed conglomerates and blood-and-iron multinational wheels. In this atmosphere, individuality ignored; crowded out, squashed. All reasons why young do-it-yourself punks calling for new culture stand outside influence of mainstream.

In support of this I helped organize cheap concerts in basements, in VFW halls, in squats, in storefronts; angry red-faced poetry, loud punk rock, in clouds of smoke other assorted musicians, all of whom by zonked out lifestyle mounted efforts against yuppie and disease-ridden 1980s.

How did society react to these crazed manifestations of underground freak culture? With frightening special police employing undercover tactics, who fined me \$22,000. For being organizer, I was targeted by maverick NYC Sanitation Police. I am still challenging vague law used to hang me with outrageous fines. My \$22,000 crime: creating subversive handbills, labeled "garbage" by professional bureaucratic PR machine. While local political do-nothings know the situation and refuse to remedy. The ultimate result: one more manifestation of shrinking constitutional rights.

As of 16 OCT 89, Bob Z's fines have been knocked down on a technicality to about \$300 or so. The judge's decision means that the New York anti-poster law remains in effect. Over fifty people a month continue to get fined for handbills on public property.

Donate to the fight! Send donations to STOP-GRO, c/o Saris Bookmarketing, 125 E. 23rd St. #300, NY, NY 10010. Donations over \$9 will get a free STOP-GRO t-shirt (while supplies last).



Joanne Rand

self-profile

I am Southern, born and bred in the deep South, which breeds a certain tenacious pride and a certain ostrich-like quality. Southerners like to stick their heads in the sand. We didn't seem to hear what was *really* going on in the world, growing up in Georgia. They feed you the watered-down, prettied-up version. Comfortable. Too comfortable. This is something I am struggling with now, in particular, because I am becoming more (painfully) aware of the mess we're in: socially, politically, environmentally.... and I want to take this news back home (I still call Georgia "home"), but I'm met with blank stares and denial!

As a child, my happiest moments were out in the woods, in the fields, on the beach... somewhere on the earth and in touch with the earth. This has not changed, but it's taken me quite a long time to realize this simple fact, and act on it (so many years spent in cities!).

When I was ten or eleven I got a cheap tape deck and spent hours fabricating whole radio shows, complete with narrator (DJ), orchestra, opera singers, etc. Then my brother got a hold of the tape and recorded some snide remark at the end—*humiliation!*

This leads me to what I *disliked* (and still dislike) as a child: humiliation. But I'm learning that with a little humility it's easier to avoid humiliation.

I used that cheap tape deck for years, until I got a 4-track cassette five years ago and began experimentation. I finally went into an 8-track studio two years ago to record my first tape, "Home." I thought it would take two weeks—instead, it took five months! I begin recording my next tape in three days (24-track studio this time), and I am frightened and excited. I will be bald in this tape—no fluff production to bolster me up.... just me. Honest... but.... am I enough? I am what I am! This second tape will be much easier: I am more practiced and familiar with the process.

What I like best about recording is laying down the vocal track(s) once everything else is there. Or adding my piano accompaniment—i.e. playing with other musicians (or myself), which I rarely get to do, it seems. I also like arranging and seeing the pieces fit together.

I don't like laying down the first track! When I'm trying to play guitar/piano without singing the lyrics, I feel like a sweaty-palmed automaton trying to play with feeling. I also dislike all the dealings with duplication companies and printing companies, etc., etc.,....

My first tape really opened a lot of doors for me. It's funny, your first release, you expect the world to keel over in awe of your artistry. And then you realize how *many other* musicians are doing the same thing, and it's a slow, building process. But it does build!

My first review was mixed. I had been waiting impatiently for it, and then was slapped in the face by some of the things he said (he didn't like all the swirling harmonies....), which I can understand, now. But then, it was difficult for me to take—if you want to last in



this business, be prepared to *face rejection* and not lose faith in what you're doing. One thing I am learning in life: not everyone has to like me.

Recording, to me, is ten times better than playing in front of a huge, turned-on audience.... because the sound can be perfect and beautiful and can truly *move* me while I'm making it happen.... and then.... it's *not* all over with.... it's down on tape, and can be recaptured forever. It's about the only *crack* at immortality I'll ever get.

As I learn to let "me" step out of the way and let the process happen, I think I am becoming more and more successful at expressing my gut-level feelings. "Sing from the gut," they say. And my most expressive work is in this vein. I express my opinions. I'm generally disgusted with our government and consumer society. I like to express sheer joy at being alive and free (more or less), and able to *sing!* I express personal and universal pain and love. And more and more these days, an underlying sense of FAITH in creative forces.

As far as getting my music out into the world goes, I sell most of my tapes at performances, rather than in stores or through distributors. This is still the best way to get your music out there.... put *yourself* out there, and sing, or do what you do, and people will want to take you home with them.

My current favorite tape is Chris Wells' *Missing Link*. I know this guy, and I never realized what an incredible musician and poet he is! Check him out: 1349 Cerro Gordo, Santa Fe, NM 87501; (505) 982-2768.

Something is happening/unfolding in my life: my beliefs are coming into alignment with my lifestyle, and my "outlet" (better word than "career"). I am finding the need to express my view of this craziness we're living in, and how it's driving us to the brink of extinction, and how we must re-train ourselves to *consider our actions* and *consider the consequences* of our daily lifestyles, on the environment (which comes boomeranging back to us). The time is running out for us to wake up. And the pressure is building inside of me to sing: "WAKE UP! The treadmill running on our steam is a big machine that turns dust to ashes. STOP THE MACHINE THAT WE HAVE BECOME..... SOMEHOW!"

Joanne's first tape, "HOME" is available for \$10 and a new tape has just been released called "Choosing Sides" which is available for \$11 (\$16 on CD) from 4307 Big Flat Rd., Crescent City, CA 95531. She's touring the West Coast (along with several stops in Arizona and New Mexico) February and March 1990 with author/activist Mavis Müller, doing a combined concert, slide-show and dramatic presentation about Wild Alaska to benefit the Alaska Recovery Coalition's efforts to heal Alaska from the Exxon Valdez oil spill.



Tapism Tapism Tapism Tapism

by
Pawnee Ribber

In the end, it really all comes down to tape. When we breathe our final breath, we will live on, preserved for the ages on strips of brown, magnetic medium. This is the thought behind the formation of the concept of tapism. No, don't send your "love offering," don't break with whatever faith you may practice. Tapism is more of a state of mind than a religion, though religion is the closest thing to a descriptive term to characterize my own mental fixation with preserving sounds.

Most GAJOOB readers are more of the musician, that is, tape is merely one element in the creative process, music and musicianship being of greater significance. This is not tapism. The recordings made with tapism in mind are totally for the tape's own sake. They are not demos for use when some major label decides to "make me a star." They are totally for the amusement of those who would listen to them. There are no hidden meanings, only juxtapositions of sound.

In tapism, rehearsal is kept to a minimum, if it is implemented at all. The ability to improvise on the spot is a keystone to the craft. In this manner, chance accidents are the result, as opposed to oft-repeated, planned, concert-like performances. Anyone can be trained to play a series of notes on a keyboard. Anyone can learn the lyrics to a song they've heard 100 times. Making them up as you go along, "live," on the other hand is a more creative process.

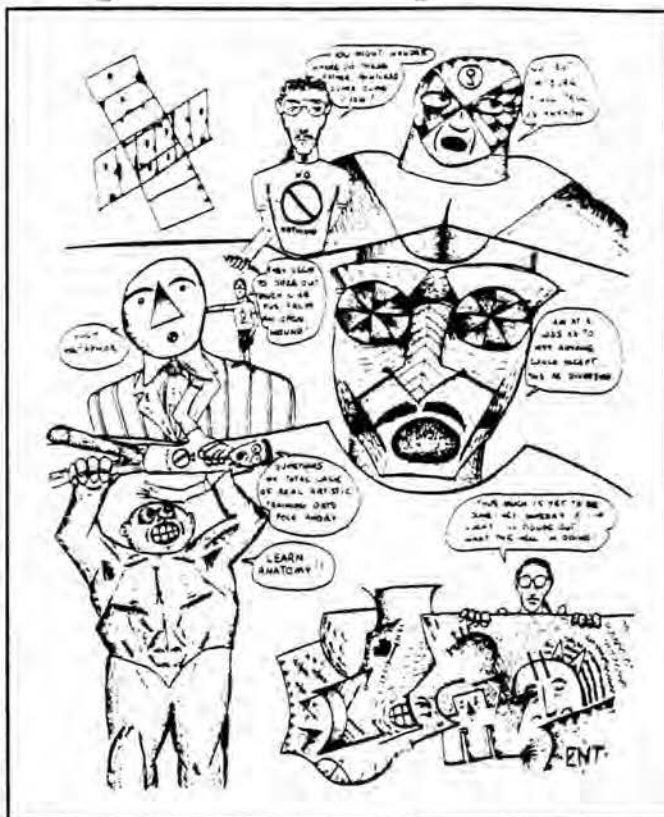
There's the old comparison, before this electronic age, a performer needed a minimal amount of material, as he could travel for his entire life without coming before the same audience. Today, you do a bit on the "Tonight" show and then you can toss it in the trash.

Tapism is an attempt to infuse as much of the magic of creativity into the world of audio recording. I usually make tape collages, and to provide an example of what I am trying to describe, I'll try to express the process that is utilized.

I'll start by going through my tapes and choosing likely candidates for use for the sound bites that will make up my collage. For the most part, I use "spoken word" stuff like tapes of talk radio shows, old radio shows from the 30s and 40s, answering machine tapes, surreptitiously recorded conversations, religious or motivational tapes and whatever else catches my fancy. Lately, to give the finished product cohesion, I've chosen radio drama of appropriate zen-like ridiculousity to use as a progressing, recurrent theme.

To make audio colleges, you need a deck with a "tight" pause button. That is, one with which you can control tape roll with total precision. Most better decks have those "soft touch" pause apparatus that make clean, exact editing a virtual impossibility. Consequently, I usually wind up using "portable" cassette decks.

Now, utilizing the selective listening process, I start to go through my source tapes in search of catchy phrases, lines that, when taken out of context, sound appropriately bizarre, humorous or just stuff that sounds right for my tape. As I place these on my master tape, I try to keep in mind the last cut, and begin to build



juxtapositions of unrelated sources that create striking audio coincidences. Oddly, a lot of these coincidences seem to fall into place on their own with little effort on my part. At times it seems supernatural. Here is where the process becomes nearly religious in a way.

As the work progresses, I continue to interject amongst the random clips my progressing radio dramas. At times I'll add an obscure song from my archives, or even from one of my original tunes.

As a tapist, one must first work towards entertaining one's self. Tapists are not out to entertain everyone. No New Kids on the Block are we. We are probably too small to even be called a cult. Our goal is to put entertainment back to a small "fireside" sized mode. Everything in our mainstream, even in our so-called underground, has become something that is conceived for a massive audience. Certain standards in production value are required that, in order to meet, one needs a fortune in equipment or to be financed by an outside means. Tapism, while recognizing that listenability is important, dictates that digital reproduction is an unnecessary thing.

This isn't to say that tapism is something that you should have any interest in. Once again, it's a highly personal mode of expression. In fact, it's really only a step above a kid playing with his tape deck with his friends for fun. But, that's the key term: fun. Too often things are taken far too seriously.

Pawnee Ribber is the Editor of a new zine called "Cluttered Mind," and the creator of several tape collages using the techniques described above. He can be reached at PO Box 255, Monticello, NY 12701; (914) 794-7079.



Poetry Page



Holly Day

I really have no idea what to say about myself. I'm 18 years old, and my publications include Bad Newz, Guts, the Tome, Malcontent, Real Life in a Big City, Spinal Jaundice, Dead Plotte and Profane existence.

My hobbies include skateboarding and crocheting. I guess that's it.

*Leibe,
Holly Day*

I WISH

so many things I wish I could do over
I wish I could do us over
I wish we could have been more than friends
I wish we were both so shy
I wish I had the guts to come on to you
I wish you had the guts to call me
maybe next time

DREAM #27

I dreamed
the two of us were
back together again
sitting on a park bench
by the side of a lake
you were making love to me
with an icepick
flicking bits of my flesh
out to the ducks
I was in an oblivious state
of ecstasy
watching my torso
gradually
disintegrating
under your loving touch
and as I gradually lost hold
of the park bench
I slipped sideways
onto your lap
you picked me up gently
moved my body over to the clearing
and, with a fork
you helped the crows
pick out my eyes

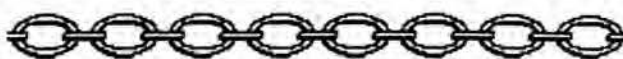
BABYLON

Babylon
you looked down upon me
and my babyloins
and decided me ripe for picking
I was not ready
nor am I yet ready
the merchants who sold me
were careful not to hurt me
not to spoil me
and sold my babyloins
to anyone who was into
legal rape
molestation
I could not climb your high walls
I'm too old
too used
to be any good now
inside me
Death has reared himself a throne
and my babyloins
no longer fit comfortably
in the seat

KISSING COUSINS

I think
Grandma knows
about us in the car
never in the barn
about us in the city
no one suspected
we don't look anything alike
there's nothing in the Bible
that says
this is evil
and it sure feels good
but someone must've seen
the seat
the same shade of lipstick
on each other's lips
I think
Grandma did

CHAIN LETTERS



Well, boys and girls.... Here's another heaping helping of those pesky chain letters. Dare to play!

Instructions:

Send a magazine, book, record, cassette, picture, collage, or something else made by *you* to the first person on each of the lists below. Remove the first name on the lists, then add your name and address to the bottoms. Make ten (10) copies of this letter (or each one in which you choose to participate) (including your name and address) and send them to people anywhere whom you think will keep the idea *growing*. Quite soon, things from over 100 individuals and groups will arrive at your address. Or maybe not— hey, that's part of the fun, ain't it?

List Number One:

Mariacelste Tiselli, Via Todaro 4, 40126 Bologna, ITALIA
 Mick Hobbs, 10 Oakley Place, London SE1 5AD, U.K.
 Christine Vettori, Schoepfstrasse 49, 6020 Innsbruck, AUSTRIA
 Barbara Winkler, Schiesstattstrasse 12A, 8130 Starnberg, WEST GERMANY
 BURO DIDEROT, POSTFACH 15, 6027 INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA
 Out of Depression, Postfach 55, 7752 Reichenau, WEST GERMANY
 Obscure Delight, Trevor Hall, 58 Peel Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6AL, ENGLAND
 Irre Tapes, Matthias Lang, Barendellstrasse 35, 6795 Kindsbach, WEST GERMANY
 •Write for free catalog •Send music for compilations •Send me info, tapes, flyers, etc. •
 Poison Plant, c/o Jack Hurwitz, 7 Woodsend Pl., Rockville, MD 20854, USA
 GAJOOB Magazine, c/o Bryan Baker, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110, USA



List Number Two:

Oliver Beckmann, Knappenweg 51 f, 7000 Stuttgart 80, WEST GERMANY
 Julia Rein, Meranerstrasse 45, 1000 Berlin 62, WEST GERMANY
 Max Olsson, Karsvilksgatan 7, 11241 Stockholm, SWEEDEN
 Katrina Mark, Karlsvilksgatan 7, 11241 Stockholm, SWEEDEN
 Victoria Doggett, 2550 McAllister, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA
 Ann Quinby, 2404 Broadway #6, Oakland, CA 94612, USA
 David McCord, PO Box 9439, Berkeley, CA 94709, USA
 Graham Trivelp, Box 481, Rt. 113, Lianville, PA 19353, USA
 Andrea Blerwirth, 7 Sudan St. #3, Dorchester, MA 02125, USA
 Stephen Popkin Productions, 231 E. 29th St. #113 Loft, NY, NY 10016, USA
 GAJOOB Magazine, c/o Bryan Baker, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110, USA



List Number Three:

Fred Perin, 25 square Jean Mace 78190 TRAPPES FRANCE
 Black Flowers C.P., 10080 S. Benigno C. Torino ITALY
 •Band •Mail Order Catalog •Label •Distribution •Art Graphics •Photo •Design •Painting •
 Terrain Vague zine, c/o Frank Garcia, 74 Rue Segueineau, 33700 Merignac, FRANCE
 Terrapin Syndicate, Lot Duran #3, Pouydesseaux 40120, Rockfort, FRANCE
 Luigi-bob drake, PO Box 18817, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
 Buxinrut, R.D. 1 Box 49, Frederica, DE 19346
 IRRE Tapes, c/o Matthias Lang, Barendellstr. 35, 6795 Kindsbach, W GERMANY
 GAJOOB Magazine, c/o Bryan Baker, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110, USA



List Number Four:

The Skeleton Quarterly, c/o Raininghouse, Box 32631, Kansas City, MO 64111
 Virgin Meat, c/o Steve B., 5247 W. L-10, Quartz Hill, CA 93536
 Cosmic Ray, PO Box 2712, Rodondo Beach, CA 90278
 Jonathan, c/o Secrets of Life and Death, 5205 W. Caribbean, Glendale, AZ 85306
 Cool Loser Zee, c/o Wendy, 7277 Rue la Fleur, Palos Verdes, CA 90274
 Bob Z, c/o Sarris Book Marketing, 125 E. 23rd St. #300, NY, NY 10010
 dab/A, c/o Gizmo Stress, 1247 Graham Ave. #H-8, Florence, AL 35360
 EGG, c/o Mom @ 10 Caravella Lane, Nanuet, NY 10954
 GAJOOB Magazine, c/o Bryan Baker, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110, USA

It's really important, especially for those at the bottom of the list, that everyone who receives a copy of this letter follows the instructions. This is just a small step towards greater communication between members of various worldwide subcultures. *Nothing bad will happen if you break the chain*, but please try to keep it going..... after all, ten zeroes, ten postage stamps and one piece of your work are not much to ask. **LONG LIVE THE NETWORK!**



by
Jeff "Fingerhead" Jarvie

Jimmy Hoffa is entombed under the goalpost of the New Jersey Giants stadium. Traci Lords' films are entombed in Hanger 18 at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio (the same hanger that also contains frozen extraterrestrials and Elvis clones).

If you don't know who Jimmy Hoffa is, you should watch *In Search Of*, read *Playboy*, or just wait for his colon to appear in your breakfast sausage. Anyway, Jimmy Hoffa was a Teamster leader who wandered into oblivion many years ago and has not been seen since. Over the years, many theories have arisen to explain his disappearance. Here are just a few: he was fed to gators in Florida; he was pressed into sausage in Ohio; he was abducted by aliens who forced him to watch Traci Lords' films until his eyes popped out, then they rearranged his molecules until he resembled Elvis (so all of these Elvis sightings that we read about in *The Weekly World News* can now be explained—it's just Jimmy Hoffa with rearranged molecules).

Whichever Jimmy Hoffa disappearance theory you subscribe to, you have to admit that he would make one damn scary Elvis.

I first learned about Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance from an episode of *In Search Of*, hosted by the God-like actor/singer, Leonard Nimoy (if you've ever heard Leonard sing "Highly Illogical" or "Proud Mary" you'd understand why I refer to him as "God-like").

In fact, if it wasn't for Leonard Nimoy and *In Search Of*, there would be no "Speculation" column. Leonard Nimoy is the godfather of speculation. So, if you wanna bitch about this column, I suggest that you write to Leonard. In the words of Charles Manson: "Why blame me—I didn't write the music."

What was this column about? Okay, now I remember. (Question: What do tirades and Elvis have in common? Answer: They both can have magical powers).

Anyway, *In Search Of* informed a young Jeff Jarvie about the strange case of Jimmy "where the Hell am I?" Hoffa. It got me to thinkin'. I started spending all my free time thinking about the whereabouts of Jimmy Hoffa. I spent so much time thinking about Jimmy Hoffa that I lost all my friends, had to drop out of High School, and started reading Leonard Nimoy poetry books for sexual gratification.

After losing my friends, my education, and obtaining a

poetry-fueled sex-drive, I knew that I had hit rock bottom.

Luckily, I found solace in the porn films of Traci Lords. Thanks to Traci, I solved the Jimmy Hoffa mystery. So, now you're asking: "So Jeff, where is Mr. Hoffa?" Well, I'd like to tell you, but due to legal reasons and Christina Applegate, I can't tell you. But I can tell you this.... We all have times in our lives when we feel lost. We all have times in our lives when we feel like we are being buried under a football stadium or made into sausage. So where is Jimmy Hoffa? I'd like to think that there's a little bit of Jimmy Hoffa in all of us. And wouldn't you?

Traci Lords changed my life. The first film of hers that I remember watching was called *Lust in the Fast Lane*. If you haven't seen this film, you're just outta luck, because this film is among the many Traci Lords' films that were sucked into the abyss after it was discovered that her father was Billy Barty.

Lust in the Fast Lane is the Plan 9 From Outer Space of porn films. In Plan 9, a ghastly looking Bela Lugosi wanders in and out of a graveyard. In *Lust in the Fast Lane*, a ghastly looking Traci Lords wanders in and out of lucidity. Plan 9 provides us with many shocks by showing us closeups of paper plate UFOs (a brief flashback to my last column). *Lust in the Fast Lane* provides us with many shocks by showing us closeups of Traci's genitals. Plan 9 was directed by Ed Wood Jr., who often dressed in women's clothes on the movie set. *Lust in the Fast Lane* was directed by Adam, who is often heard giving such bizarre directions as: "Lick it off each other's faces." And you thought that the Lincoln/Kennedy coincidences were eerie.

But don't feel bad if you haven't seen *Lust in the Fast Lane*; so far, only Craig Blomquist and I have seen it. And the CIA put LSD in his tap water so that he wouldn't talk about it.

Traci is still around (unlike Jimmy Hoffa, Elvis, JFK and Dorothy Wallace). She appears in the re-make of the sci-fi classic, *Not of This Earth* (you can say that again). The movie poster states: "Traci Lords is not of this Earth" (another flashback to my last column).

Hopefully, one day Leonard Nimoy will go in search of Traci Lords. And if we're lucky, we can all go along with him. Maybe we can raid Hanger 18, discover Traci's "lost" films. Take pictures of the frozen alien corpses, and then invite Jimmy Hoffa/Elvis to view the alien photos and Traci's videos with us. To dream the impossible dream....

In conclusion, I'd just like to say that Jimmy Hoffa may never be found, Traci Lords' films may never be viewed again—but Leonard Nimoy will always have a theory (or a poem) about where they are.

A Dorothy Walrus is never Paul.

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Greetings From Santa Cruz!

by
Eric Muhs

We're still here after the big earthquake, but a lot of the downtown is a lot more wide open than it used to be. At this point, a lot of us are looking around, trying to figure out what's left and what's still here.

Santa Cruz has enjoyed a twenty-year reputation as an intellectual and cultural mecca. An "Alternative" state university was established with smaller class sizes and written evaluations instead of grades, and the city has grown both in size and as a haven for liberals. Last July 4th, a ruckus was raised by neighboring towns over the City Council's decision not to re-invite the Navy to anchor a ship off the pier. The City Council felt that the presence of the ship was simply a recruitment ploy used to further confrontational militaristic ideology.

Naturally, the weather, the university, and the liberal attitudes have drawn a lot of musicians to the area. A few have done fairly well for themselves, but in a community of perhaps 50,000, performing opportunities are more limited than the number of musicians. A lot of us have turned to homotaping as a way to keep active in music, while we wait in line for a gig. Some of us don't even wait in line, we just keep the mixers and the mail boxes full of good music.

One nucleus of tapers revolves around and through the groups BOX O' LAFFS, the WRESTLING WORMS, & CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN (homotapers to the nth power). Box O' Laffs was an institution, and featured ERIC CURKENDALL's surreal and sublime poetic rants sung, mumbled, and screamed over an acid surf sound. Their tape, DOGBOOK, is a long collection of twenty-four live recordings. When I moved to Santa Cruz, I listened to it every day. It's got a great energy. The Wrestling Worms have also enjoyed some favor at the fringes of society, gradually stripping down from an 11-piece bizarre-but-tight jazz/rock/poetry concoction to a 5-piece improvisational back up for Eric C.'s cut-up and pasted back together magazine readings. They have a record and tapes available. Camper Van Beethoven, whose records you can now buy at better record stores everywhere, started from this same milieu.

Another taper-to-live-band is WORLD ENTERTAINMENT WAR. On the strength of a tape of that title, Poet turned Ad-man, ROBBRENTZ, launched a live band as a pedestal for his pseudo-political self-aggrandisement. ("If I am elected, charisma will be the national disease.") The band just released a record, TELEVISIONARY, that they hope will send them out of the homotaping arena forever. They are a good live act, powered by drummer ANTHONY GUESS, who did the same job for Box O' Laffs earlier.

Not from Santa Cruz, but important to the scene here, is DON CAMPAU, whose bi-weekly radio show on Cupertino public radio station KKUP-FM 91.5 brings an enormous variety of homotaping projects to the airwaves every second Sunday afternoon. Don plays anything and everything he has time for, and he records and makes available, very cheaply, cassettes (completely catalogued) of each show. There must be 50 or 100 of these radio samplers, and they are a great introduction to homotaping. Don's show is a stopping-over point for many traveling home tapers, and some of the tapes include interviews with AL MARGOLIS, DINO DIMURO, and even myself.

Don is an active homotaper himself, and his LONELY WHISTLE MUSIC has a catalog of 20-30 tapes by himself, cohort GREG GRAY, daughter NICOLE, and Santa Cruz musician JOE MENICHETTI, among others. Don does a lot of songs, some tape loop and unusual instrument experiments, and his tapes are full of humor. My copy of PIÑATA PARTY came stuffed in one of those plastic strawberry containers from Safeway where Don works, along with green plastic Easter grass, little army men, "FRESH" stickers, and lots of other treats.

KZSC-FM 88.1 is another not-for-profit radio station run from the University. Sandwiched between all kinds of music, DAS runs the UB RADIO NETWORK. A key figure in the industrial/ambient/noise performing collaboration known as BIG CITY ORCHESTRA, Das receives at least twenty to thirty new cassettes from around the world each Thursday night when he stops by the station to pick up his mail. The music he receives and plays is less eclectic than Don Campau's show, generally focusing on the industrial end of things, and the broadcast itself reflects some strong dada tendencies. Sending out sounds from two or three cassettes

at once is a favorite, perhaps blended with some Partridge Family if it's after midnight.

Two other public radio stations operate in reception range, KUSP-FM 88.9, and KAZU-FM 90.3. They keep the area supplied with all manner of unusual and hard to obtain music, and although programming is volunteer and tends to change occasionally, there are receptive ears at these stations for the new and unheard-of. INDUSTRIAL HOOTANANNY, hosted by LOIUS X. ERLANGER on the former station, recently requested environmental recordings from everywhere for a live collage broadcast.

In a very different direction, the improvisational group U-T GRET, consisting of core members JOEE CONROY & DAVID STILLEY, has produced a number of tapes of their daring and challenging music. Willing to use every instrument at all, including Macedonian bagpipe, bass clarinet, chinese gongs, Serge modular synthesizer, Yamaha wind synthesizer, and sitar, these guys walk a tightwire every time they perform. Unlike most of what goes for improvised music, they can leap centuries in a moment. Their tapes collect best sections from many concerts, and, alas, are the only part of them left in Santa Cruz. Responding to the high cost of living here, they were packing their bags for the greener fields of Kentucky when the earthquake struck. Joee was able to talk his way past the cops to retrieve many of his instruments from the condemned Greenpeace store where he worked.

Last but not least, CHARLES LAUREL, MICHEAL TORREY, & myself, ERIC MUHS, have been extremely active in homotaping in various combinations. Between us, we have forty separate releases ranging from pop dance music, INVISIBLE WILBUR, to avant-joke dance music, MATA RATA, to weird tales for twisted tots, ANT & BEE, to the electronically produced sublime, ERIC MUHS, to one man Henry Cow, CHARLES LAUREL, to synth-pop, R. MICHEAL TORREY, to production of computer music by paraplegic PJ OTTO. We turned MATA RATA into a performing band for about a year, working up versions of many of our own homotaped songs, as well as a few by Don Campau and Dino DiMuro. Mr. Torrey has also succumbed to the difficulties of eking out a living here, and is on his way to Portland.

That happens to a lot of folks here. An average room in a house with a bunch of other people, sharing a bathroom, costs about four hundred dollars a month. There are so many musicians that the venues can pick and choose. One question frequently asked by club owners is, "Does your audience drink a lot?" They're in it for the money, unlike a lot of homotapers. I was talking to Karl from the Wrestling Worms, and his response to Santa Cruz was, "Play in a band? I'd rather stay home and record." There are a lot of us here doing the same thing, Karl.

UBUBI
(Big City Orchestra, KZSC)
1803 Mission #554
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

LONELY WHISTLE MUSIC
(Don Campau, Joe Menichetti, KKUP)
PO Box 23852
San Jose, CA 95153

WRESTLING WORMS
6318 Ben Ave.
North Hollywood, CA 91606

SPECIFIC OCEAN MUSIC
948 15th Ave.
Redwood City, CA 94063

KAZU - FM
Pacific Grove, CA

KUSP - FM
203 8th Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

WORLD ENTERTAINMENT WAR
PO Box 1812
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

WARPT WEST
(Box O' Laffs)
PO Box 8045
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

INVISIBLE MUSIC
(Eric Muhs, Mata Rata, Invisible
Wilbur, Ant & Bee)
118 Mattison Lane
Aptos, CA 95003

—for info on U-T GRET, write here
also

INVISIBLE DISK
(R. Micheal Torrey, PJ Otto, Galibar
Louis)
2340A Capitola Road
Santa Cruz, CA 95062



GAZOOB #5
PAGE 26

On the Beginnings of Porkopolis

by
Ashley Allen

PORKOPOLIS was created as a means of distribution for the band, *Peppermint Subway*. Throughout the course of things, I find that it's an excellent opportunity to sample and compile other artists who otherwise would get little, if any, recognition for their work.

"Sub Jungle," *Peppermint Subway*'s first release, was not the first cassette that I released. In 1984 I got a Tascam 4-track and shortly thereafter, formed *Lost Bohemia Cooperative*. Our first cassette was a C60 of music, noise and spoken word, bombarded with radio sounds from my 1930's Sears Silvertone shortwave radio. We had a somewhat moderate success with the release of *Radio World* in 1984, as the world was just tasting the independent cassette thing. Moles Records has about eight copies stored somewhere in their back room in Cincinnati. After *Radio World*, I was involved in two more *Lost Bohemia* cassettes which were not made available to the public until this year. All three cassettes have many similar elements, yet all are distinctly different. We did get earplay in Canada, and on *Kindred Sanction* in Cincinnati on WAIF.

Distribution was a lot of hit and miss in the beginning. I used the contacts/network that I already had, and basically accumulated more. My main rules about mailing and contacts are pretty basic: if you don't write back, or if you rip me off or trash what I'm doing, then I don't consider you a good contact—pretty fucking basic, huh?

Here I was distributing this cassette when I got encouragement from two people: Missing Link Distribution and Carl Howard of audiophile Tapes. So I expanded the idea behind the label thing. When I did the first *Lost Bohemia* tape, I found no great market; so in 1987 I wrote to a small cassette label and inquired about distribution and advice, based on their experience,

etc. By the time I got a reply, I already had four tapes ready to distribute!

Now PORKOPOLIS has about 20 cassettes. I work with other small labels and exchange and distribute. I have distribution in Poland, France, England and Canada—besides the USA. I am especially excited with some of the Polish stuff I've acquired for distribution through RED Cassettes in Wroclaw, and from the band, Zima. RED distributes my stuff, and I distribute some of his, and we basically work together.

I feel that I have a better chance of selling more tapes if I keep the cost down, considering the cost of everything else these days. With the small amount of money that does come in, I buy more cassettes and postage. Hell, it's a lot cheaper than drugs! But I'm sure the government will try to crack down on it because a) it's not corporate, b) it's too free of an expression, and c) "Where's all those hundreds of thousands of dollars you're hiding from all those silly cassettes you're pushing?!"

Incidentally, a good source for blanks is Greencorp in Florida. They have an 800 number, and for \$4 you can get samples and deduct the \$4 from your next order. I get a decent deal on labels from CTL Magnetics in Kalamazoo.

It's been a good year and a half, as far as learning this new hobby. Some day I hope to break even.

Ashley Allen is the person behind PORKOPOLIS. He's eager to receive your submissions for several ongoing compilation projects he's got in the works. Send a written note, along with your submission, giving him permission to use your works on his comps. Also send a SASE for guaranteed reply from: Ashley Allen, PO Box 3529, Cincinnati, OH



COMALAND

FEATURING "JAYHAWK"
— LORD OF THE ONION RINGS



SPONGE STUDIOS ©1987

the

Portable Boood USIC Unit

Nuclear Brain Physics Surgery School Lab

Philosopher's Union Member Mouthpiece

Blatnerphone Hallucinomat

by
tENTATIVELY, a cONVENIENCE
 assisted by Dave Guercio

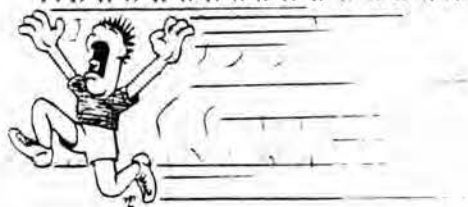


This is a portable CONCRETE MIXING studio consisting of a suitcase filled with electronics weighing approximately 43 pounds and generally pulled on a metal frame with wheels; a back-pack containing 4 speakers, a PXL-2000 VAUDIO (i.e., video) camera/vcr wrapped in a shirt (in this instance with "I LOVE STRING USIC" written on it), 2 drumsticks, a small cymbal, and, sometimes, an AC-powered amplifier, a 25-foot heavy-duty extension cord, and a multi-outlet strip weighing about 15 pounds; and a box capable of holding 60 cassette tapes.

The suitcase is laid horizontally on its metal carrying frame and its 3 front flaps are unlocked to reveal 2 red plastic mouths, each on a white plastic background (these are the fronts of BLABBERMOUTH RADIOS) on either end - with a recessed tv in the middle.



YAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH





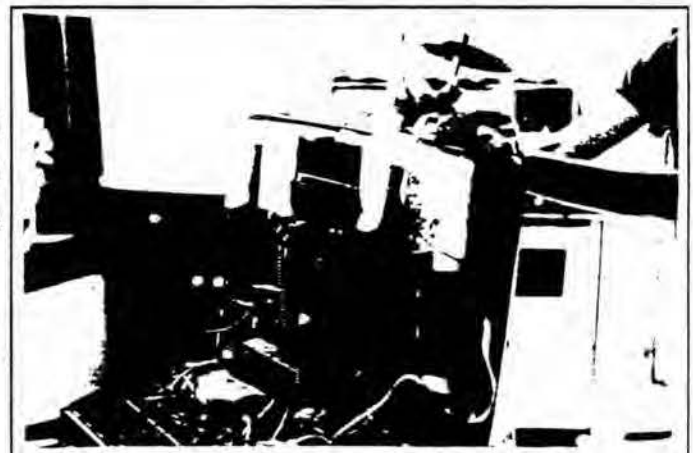
The suitcase is unlocked and opened so that the front is vertical and facing the audience and the tv is fit into the middle hole. The electronics are thusly revealed.

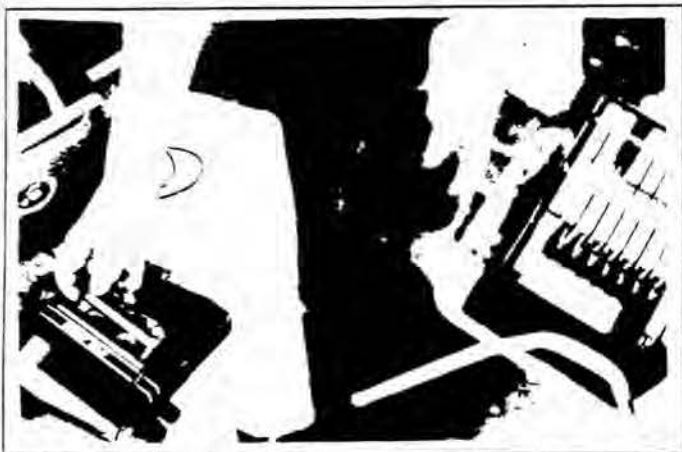
The backpack is opened and the 2-way speakers (40 watts, 8 ohms, frequency range: 50 - 14,000 cps - with fake tweeters), t-shirt, camera/vcr, and percussion equipment are removed.



The speakers and vcr are plugged into the suitcase.

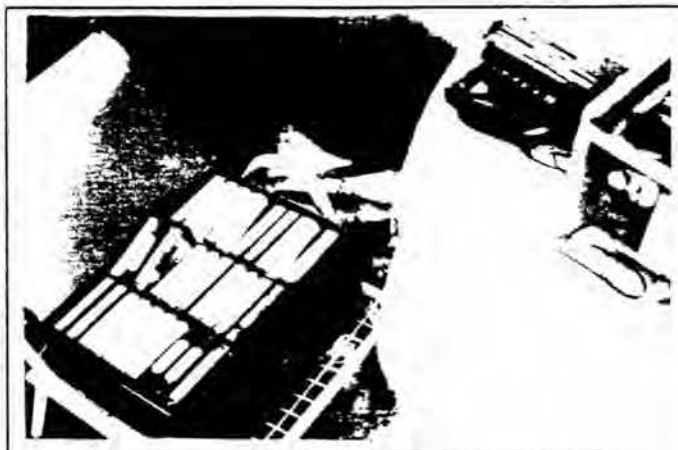
The cymbal is placed on top of a ball-point pen which is taped to a lock flap which has a piezo sensor contact mike taped to it to enable the cymbal's amplification.



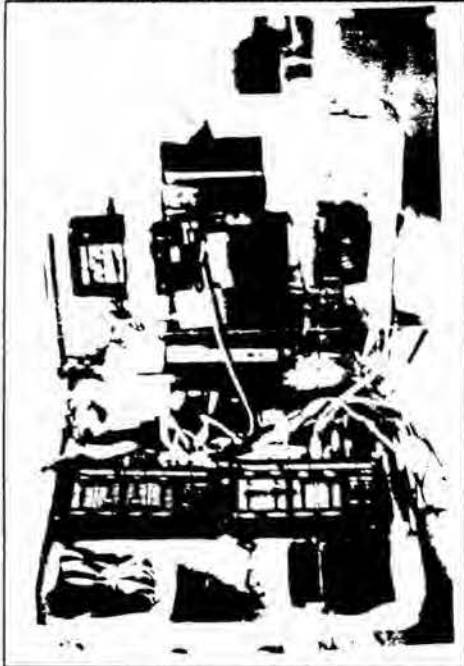


1 side of the tape-carrying case contains VAUDIO tapes for the PXL-2000. These tapes all contain black & white close-ups of mouths talking about their philosophies - i.e., they are all PHILOSOPHER'S UNION MEMBER'S MOUTHPIECES. 1 selected and placed in the vcr/camera to be played through the tv.

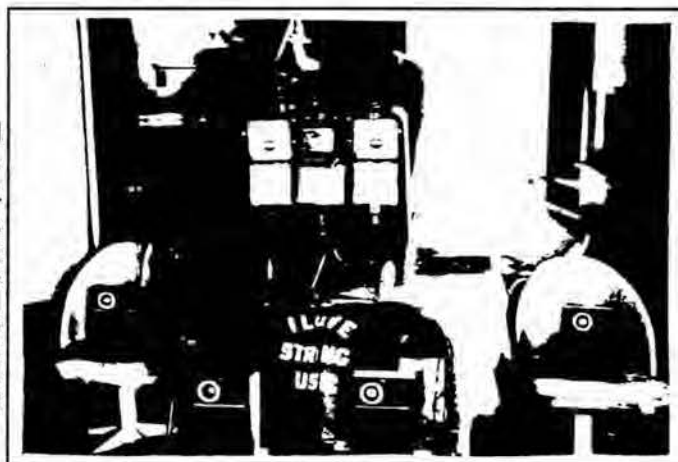
The flip-side of the carrying case contains all audio tapes specially made or chosen as USICAL MATERIALS. These tapes are made or chosen to provide "randomly" excerptable conceptual and sound-emphasized content, e.g., a tape made by electronically manipulating BBC "Transitions & Cues" sound effects is included for an extrapolation of its original BBC function, a tape made from playing blades of grass is chosen for its piercing "linear" qualities, a tape of an anti-C.I.A. radio talk show conspiracy theorist is chosen for its voice-over political potential, and a short loop of dogs yowling is used for its potential "non-lingual" emotive content. 4 tapes are chosen and placed in the tape players.



The suitcase itself contains the above-mentioned 4 tape players, which are also AM/FM radios, and various other equipment. 3 of the players are auto-reversible, 1 of them records and 2 of them have equalizers. They are all stereo and have their outputs going into the line inputs of 2 4-channel mixers. 1 of the players is reduced to mono via a Y-adapter to free 1 of the line inputs for the sound from the monitor/tv. The mike inputs have 1 or more contact mikes plugged in - to amplify the cymbal, the body of the suitcase, my voice, other people's instruments, etc.. - and the enable the creation of feedback. The output from the mixers is Y-adapted to stereo and routed into an 80-watt care amplifier/equalizer - which plays out through the 4 speakers. The mixers and the amp's fader allow various types of panning. The amp/equalizer, the tv/monitor, and the PXL-2000 vaudio camcorder are all powered by 2 rechargeable battery packs good for about an hour or 2 or power. Various other relevant accessories - such as electrical tape, rechargers, etc... - are included.



The BUSKING UNIT (so-called because its self-contained power and portability enable it to be used BUSKING, i.e., street-performing) is played by combining the tapes, radio, sounds, percussion, voice, PXL-2000 tapes, etc... together through the mixers and altering their tonal qualities with the equalizers etc... through a process that i call CONCRETE MIXING - i.e., a production of something akin to "Musique Concrete" through mixing - without strictly musical intentions. The auto-reverse capabilities make possible a specific type of rhythmic play. The PHILOSOPHER'S UNION MEMBER'S MOUTHPIECE shown on the central monitor/tv is flanked by the other 2 mouths which open and close in sync with the variations in volume.



An Awful Title in the Life of a Temporary Worker

Sept. 27, '89ev

by

Michael Tolson

- 4:30AM** alarm clock sounds off - awaken after perhaps 5 1/2 hrs of sleep
- 4:40AM** leave to walk to temporary workers' office
- 5:20AM** arrive at office where approximately 35 blacks are already waiting - the author is the only white on the temporary workers' side - 2 fat white guys & 1 middle class looking black guy are behind the counter - informed that arrival before 5:00AM earns one \$3.75 hrly, arrival between 5:00AM & 5:30AM earns \$3.50 hrly, & arrival between 5:30AM & 6:00AM earns one minimum wage (\$3.35 hrly) - given that temporary workers don't leave the office 'til 6:00AM at the earliest, this means that, if I work 8 hrs, I can make \$2.80 (minus taxes) *daily* more for waiting in the office an hr before leaving! - BIG FUCKING DEAL, eh?
- 6:00AM** leave in over-crowded van for job-site - 6 blacks & 1 white (the author) arrive at roofing company by 6:15AM - all the regular employees are white - 10 minutes later, one of the white guys asks: "Who here's supposed to see Fred?" - that turns out to be the author who becomes thusly further singled out from his fellow temporaries by being taken elsewhere than they were
- 6:30AM** the author leaves with Fred in a dump truck - the noise of which makes understanding/hearing Fred's friendly patter difficult - as response to the author's questioning, Fred, apparently, explains that he has been a bank robber but that he can't/won't do that anymore & that he'd supported himself as a temporary worker for 2 yrs before landing this job
- 6:50AM** arrive at the job-site where the author is given rudimentary instruction in the use of an \$85,000 vacuum cleaner the size of a van - ascension to the roof, where Fred & the author vacuum stones & otherwise work
- 2:00PM** the author takes a lunch break - eating a potted meat, mustard, & white bread sandwich generously & sympathetically proffered by Fred who has some understanding of the author's economic despair
- 3:30PM** leave w/ dump truck w/ stones etc from roof to go to "dump" (i.e.: land "owned" by rich guy who owes Fred money) to get rid of stones & get \$5 payment from rich guy towards debt
- 4:00PM** arrival at liquor store/deli where Fred buys a hot dog for himself & a 16 oz can of beer for the author & for himself
- 4:30PM** arrival at roofing company where Fred punches time clock etc after which the author & Fred leave for the bus stop
- 4:50PM** arrival at the bus stop - bus arrives soon thereafter - leaving Fred off downtown around 5:10PM & author near the temporary workers' office near 5:20PM
- 5:25PM** arrival at the temporary workers' office where 4 blacks who had already arrived from working for the roofers & 1 other black awaited their daily checks - when the white business owner called out my name, the black(s) said "He can wait his turn like the rest of us" - to which the author replied "I can wait" - resulting in increased politeness on the part of the black temps toward the author - talk of buying dope on the part of the blacks & bullshit about being a student w/ 3 dependents to try to speed up the check writing process
- 5:55PM** after receiving a check for \$24.71 (for 9 1/2 hrs work), the author waiting at a bus stop - arrival of the bus at 6:10PM
- 6:30PM** arrival at friendly bookstore where check can be cashed w/out charge - complaining about job to friends there 'til 6:45PM
- 7:00PM** arrival at home after buying pint of rum & 2 liters of soda - fixing meal & complaining w/ friends (+ other conversation) via phone & in person
- 8:25PM** getting drunk & reading letter to a friend in Scotland while bathing & shaving
- 8:45PM** beginning to attempt writing description of day even though drunkenness is substantially interfering
- 9:25PM** interruption by phone call from friend about his trying to get the author a job (unsuccessfully) followed by another drink
- 9:30PM** resumption of the poorly progressing text
- 10:25PM** end of text (?) followed by attempt to sleep in preparation for another day like this one
- 10:30PM** phone call from girlfriend

B. Traven, where are you when we need you now?

THINKIN' STRAIGHT

by
Chris Duers

I can't think very straight, in a stamping phone booth of dilutants and antihistamines, in a dull shower of rocks and broken bones, losing weak fluids at the watery sundown of orange glass triangles and Frank Sinatra tunes and sleeping while awake and driving in the bright mottled autumn foliage. On Wednesday I had coffee and drove really fast, penetrating the speed limit in a sweaty, clamped din of unreasonable noise and cursing my cluttered, trashed, red, plastic dashboard full of papers and crumpled tapes and McDonald's trash and ashes and bits of tobacco.

I ran out of wisdom and food and money at the very end of time as we know it.

At this point, I realized it would be stupid to try to sleep, but in the hazy daytime I dozed fitfully anyways, always thinking I heard weird, menacing voices in the living room, sweating in a sea of dirty clothes and trash, and finally, I awoke and smoked Marijuana. Even though everything sucked, it was my favorite thing to do.

Sometimes me and a bunch of my so-called friends drove into a big, clanking city, where tall buildings hung at jaunty angles from a hazy dome of pollution. The stink of Chinese food and stale piss swam up through the dirty grates of the ancient subway tunnels, and all was a coloured magazine rack of foreign discomfort.

Finally, at night, we came out by the industrial toll booths, making U-turns and sitting bleary-eyed in the back seat of the orange Mazda.

"Soon I'll have a helicopter and fly over all this," I thought to myself. I was not afraid to admit that I wanted a helicopter. It seemed perfectly reasonable to me.

Maybe it's because it was the golden age of giant films, starring names we all liked to hear so much, and it became obvious that my entire life was building up to an appearance on *Entertainment Tonight*—and God knows what would happen after that.

I got up and switched off the groove-tube, and it suddenly became the six hundred and twenty-seven thousandth, five hundred and eighty-nine time in my life that there was literally nothing to do; only because I

was too crushed to function normally. I babbled uselessly to myself about how I was going to be rich and famous, and made myself an oily pot of Maxwell House coffee out of a blue tin can in the sunny kitchen. But still, the seconds just kept on ticking by, and there were no autographs, no limousines, no banquets or boutiques; just the endless hush of slow, rural traffic on a pale Tuesday in October.

I reached into the box and pulled out another chocolate dinosaur cookie, glancing at the stack of disorganized records and comic books, and then drove to New Haven with a tired mind. I couldn't help it, but I thought I was in an imaginary Jean-Luc Ponty video or something, and even though this could be exciting at times, I yearned for the illusion of silent relief. I knew that the difference between order and chaos in this cartoon universe was grossly negligible, and this gave me the strength to go right ahead and think whatever the hell I wanted.

Sometimes I wanted to mention it, but other times I knew I'd get tarred and feathered if I did, and just kept quiet, blinking away harshness and regret in the soapy skyline of magic, continuous trees.

It was a spherical entity that none could trace, but all could follow into the sleepy twilight of deciduous intensity. I couldn't even make it go anywhere, no matter how hard I tried, and I was sure to be called on it by all manner of self-appointed inspectors. I was ready to lie and cheat as much as was necessary to get out of this one. This was one cherry sherbet if ever I saw one. I wanted to scream. I didn't know anyone who was quite as much of a dick-whacking smart-guy as myself. I wasn't sure whether to feel relieved or get pissed, but all this was solved when the mail came and I got my monthly issue of "Dick-Whacker's Magazine." I was engrossed in a universe so stupid and unreal, so warped and unrelenting, that I barely noticed my brains turning to cowshit in the backwards Egyptian equation of anal-oriented badness. As a matter of fact, it was a good thing I was so easily distracted and everyone else was too lame to distinguish their weenies from their middle fingers, or else I might have to explain myself a little better. The guy on TV was so ugly I almost liked myself for a second.



Joe Newman

INTERVIEW

BY

DINO DIMURO

The following interview, conducted by Dino DiMuro, took place in two parts on July 11, and July 13, 1987.

Dino DiMuro
Joe Newman

[to Joe's Machine]: Hey Joe, this is Dino. What are you doin'? [Laughs]

Hi, Dino.

Hi, guy!

What's up, man?

You screen your calls, huh? [Laughs]

Usually, yeah. I've been getting a lot of harassing phone calls lately, so....

Why?

Some guy called.... well, about 2 months ago I had a message on there with Hitler giving a speech, and then I said, "Hi, I've gone to the Pat Robertson youth rally," and apparently that really pissed somebody off, and they haven't layed off since. So I've got a trace on the phone now.

Really?

Yeah, but the cops want about 30 calls before they're willing to go prosecute.

Damn. And then the other alternative is to change your number, right? And that's a hassle.

Yeah, I thought about that. Well, it's not a big hassle, what I've done for this, but then I thought, "Well, goddamnit, I hate these motherfuckers, and I want them caught." [Laughs]. So I'm going through all the bureaucratic swill that's necessary, and the police, of course, don't give a flying fuck, so.... so anyway, that's why I screen my calls.

Well, I wonder who would have called you in the first place, that that would have pissed them off?

That's what I'm wondering, 'cause the voice isn't recognizable, and either it's someone who sells things by the phone, or someone who just dialed the wrong number... but if they dialed the wrong number they wouldn't have known what number it was, so.... I really don't know, but I would really like to find out.

(DINO DISCUSSES SETTING UP THE INTERVIEW)

The police brutality song is just, I think that's just brilliant....

Well, lately, that's really been hitting home with me. A couple weeks ago some friends of mine were playing at a club here in town, and they came out of the club after they played, and there were what appeared to be prostitutes across the street. And so they just sat down by the club and were watching for a while, and these guys were walking by, and these prostitutes were confronting them, trying to get them to, you know, go for it, and eventually one of them hit. And a van popped open, the cops jumped out, handcuffed the guy, they videotaped him, threw

him in the van, hauled him away, and they set up for the next sucker.

Oh, it was a set-up, then.

Yeah, it's fucking entrapment! So I wrote really hostile letters to the city council, the vice squad sergeant... I'm probably on a shit list now, but.... Yeah, in a file somewhere.

The cops in Austin are really vile. Really fucking vile. So, that's what inspired that.

Couldn't be any worse than the LAPD. I think we have the most "shot" people here; we have much more than New York, which doesn't make sense. I was working on a film once, and I had a cop pull a gun on us; a young guy, he was all freaked out.

You just have to realize that the kind of person who'd want to be a cop is the kind of person who likes to beat up freshmen in gym class, so that's what you get.

(DINO DISCUSSES INTERVIEW)

Did you ever get that thing I sent you about Lynda Barry?

Oh yeah! It was great! I'm really bad about... I think people who write me must think I'm a huge asshole....

Oh, I'm the same way, because there's just not time. It's hard to get around to everything.

When I first started in the mail cassette thing, I would mail to someone like Peter Catham, and I'd send him a cassette, and a great letter, and all this material, and not hear from him... and I thought he was the biggest asshole who ever walked the face of the earth, and I told people he was an asshole, and... 2 1/2, 3 years later, here I am doing the same thing, it takes me 3 months to get around to someone.

I get a few every now and then, and sometimes they send me things that are just so bad, really bad shit.

(DISCUSSION ABOUT THE NEW TAPE)

I like the second one (PLASTIC CONTAINERS RETAIN ODORS) better, I think....

Yeah, I probably overall like the second one the best of the 3....

Yeah, I think it's a better tape, it's just.... edited better, I think the music's better... I think people will like (the new tape) better. People didn't like the last one for shit. Especially around here, nobody really gave a fuck.

Really? I think this one is a little nastier than the other one, I thought people would like the last one better because the balance is better.

Well, I like *Containers* because I like the instrumental music I wrote, I was proud of that. This one, there's nothing on it that I think is compositionally wonderful.

Not even "Hitler Sandwich"?

[Pause] "Sandwich for Adolph"?

Yeah, yeah.

That's just a little barroom ditty-sounding kind of

thing, it's nothing really involved. But people usually like toilet humor, that's what gets them off, usually. That's what they latch onto quickest. I think the structure of the cop song is just gorgeous, though; especially right after the phone call... I love that sound anyway, going from phone call to some good, hard chords. Yeah, I thought that was really cliché, but I did it anyway.

Oh, it's fun! But you know that I do it too [Laughs].

Oh, everybody does! Well, I guess the first time I heard it was on *We're Only In It For the Money*, and... I can't remember any out before then that did that.

Yeah, well that was a pivotal record for me, I'm sure it was for you.

(DISCUSSION ABOUT ZAPPA)

See, I guess I'd be a purist, because in 1969 or so, I'd been listening to Tiny Tim...

Yeah, I've got some Tiny Tim records. You listen to that?

Oh, he was my guy!

God Bless Tiny Tim. Yeah, it's a great record. You know what the cool song is? "Ever Since You Told Me That You Love Me (I'm a Nut)."

Yeah! [Laughs]

Great song! [Laughs]. That's classic shit.

I like the one on the second album about the ice caps melting.

Yeah! Yeah, that's a good one. I've got both those records. I haven't listened to those in a while, I'll have to get those out.

But that was about the extent of my musical sophistication....

You were way ahead of me!

[Sputters] And also the Beatles. And then in a bargain bin, in a Thrifty, there was *Only Money*, and as it turned out, it was one of the censored discs they pressed.

"I'll love the plice as they kick the shit out of me..."?

Yeah, right. That was edited out, and uh... the story was that MGM pressed a whole bunch of 'em that way, and then he (Zappa) came in and listened to a test pressing and he went, "What the hell are you doing?" And he made them put all (the edits) back, and as far as he knew, that version never went out. But what they did was, they made cut-outs of that version. So I brought this record home and I was blown away by it anyway, but at the same time, I thought: "What's all this stuff about the Mothers being dirty? I don't hear anything on it..." So then, years later when I bought another copy, I was thinking, "What the hell's all that?" Tons of stuff on there! And they did really stupid things....

MGM really fucked with him.

Yeah, they took out a line: "I still remember Mama with her apron and her pad..." What for?

Who's got the fucked-up mind? When Mike Curb took over at MGM, he took over a lot of the production and shit, he said he was going to "...get rid of all the drug-influenced groups," like the Velvet Underground and the Mothers. The Mothers were as far from drug influenced as... well, at least Zappa is; the rest of the band was definitely drug influenced.

[INTERVIEW CHANGES DIRECTION TO RECORDING]

Are you still using your same 4-track cassette system?

Yeah, I've still got the same...

How the fuck do you get such a great sound then?

Well, I don't use microphones very much. And if I do...

Well, how do you get the vocals in there? It sounds to me like you've got 12 or 15 tracks.

Well, what I do normally is, I've got a sequencer; that helps a lot. So I sequence all the keyboards and drums, and then record that onto two tracks, and while I'm doing that I might record a guitar part. So there's all that on two tracks. And then I've got two tracks left over; so I can do vocals there. If I need to do some background vocals, I'll bounce between those two tracks. So I get 4 tracks filled up, then I dump that off to another DBX tape deck. And then I use that tape with 2 more blank tracks. I usually just do one dump. Some songs I don't do any, but I try to hold it to just one.

And what do you get from Dwain (of YU)?

He's got a PCM. It allows me to get a digital mixdown, so I can take it to the mastering place and have them run 'em off. All a PCM does is, you run your signal into it, and it creates a digital signal, and stores it on videotape. And that's what the mastering studio here in town likes to get it on. Plus, it's good to have a digital copy of your stuff, so it doesn't degrade.

Last time, didn't you use his sampler, and stuff like that?

All I used from him last time was... he had this "Aural Exciter"... kinda adds some high end, artificially. But the problem with it is, if you use too much, it starts to add a lot of hiss. It enhances your tape hiss. So it's really good if you're running direct into the tape deck, but if you're trying to do something off the tape, it tends to take your tape hiss and exaggerate it, so...

Well, you must have a sampling keyboard, right?

Yeah, I've got a Mirage.

Oh, well that explains it. And didn't he steal one of your noises and use it on *Art & Guns*? A honk, or something?

He may have. We traded some samples. That's possible. I don't know if he did or not. He has more stuff than I do. I think we used the same orchestral hit.

Is there actually a YU band, or is it just him?

It's mostly him. He's got 2 guys that come in and help out occasionally. But he's got all the stuff in his house. It's a nice recording studio.

So there are actually 3 guys then.

Yeah. One of them is his brother.

Oh, I see. I figured it was... like I used to pretend I was a band, and I thought that's what he was doing.

GAJOOB #5  PAGE 34

I just think he wants the anonymity, or whatever. Uh huh. 'Cause I wrote to him and said: "Are you really a band?" And he said, "Yeah. That's our picture on the cover of *Illusion of Control*. [It was a drawing].

[Laughs]. Yeah, I don't think he likes to... I put his name on the last tape, and he didn't like that. He just wanted me to put YU on this one, so... I just called (myself) "The Rudy Schwartz Project"... it's not like I want to be known by Rudy Schwartz, it's just a dumb name, and... I hate "Project," when someone calls a band a "Project." I thought you were doing an Alan Parsons thing.

Yeah, that's one example. I just think it's real pompous, so...

It's hard to know, in reviewing and stuff, I tend to say "group" instead of just saying "Joe Newman"... I think it's confusing to people.

It doesn't matter. People do it both ways. I don't really care.

Did you get any response from the review?

Yeah, I get a few letters that come trickling in. It's been pretty underwhelming.

Do they ever write you back and say, "I liked it"?

Yeah, occasionally. [Pause]. Every now and then. [Pause]. Real rarely. [Laughs].

Last time I talked to you, you were really checking out distribution. Did you ever...

Yeah, I've got a record company in Britain; they wanted to hear *Bowling For Appearances*. They said they liked the first two, but they wanted to hear this one, and if there's enough stuff on the three of them that they want to make an album, they'll do it. They don't have a lot of money. It's a label that R. Stevie Moore was on.

How many would they press? About 5000? We haven't gone to that level of detail; I'm just hoping they want to do it.

[A CB RADIO PARTIALLY OBLITERATES CONVERSATION]

When I was in L.A., I looked in the phone book, and Steve Vai was there, so I called him. He was real friendly. Real tolerant. [Laughs] I talked to him for about half an hour....

This whole thing (Contragate, Reagan, the adulation of Oliver North) is just proof that democracy may not be a valid form of government. It's really scary. Really fucked up.

PT. 2 — July 13, 1987

Tell me about your distribution system as it stands now.

Well, as it stands, I do it all myself. If anyone ever orders a tape, then I put them on a mailing list; they get a card notifying them that a new one's coming out. And I've distributed to a few record stores here in Austin.

The cards you send out... are they Xeroxed cards?

Yeah, it's just Xeroxed onto some cardboard, and I cut 'em up and mail 'em. Low budget.

How big is your mailing list?

[Laughs]. Oh, probably about 25 people.

When I talked to you after the first tape, you said at the time you'd sold a hundred of them.

No no, that's not true. I had probably sold 50 and given away 50.

Okay, right. So there were a hundred of them out there.

Yeah, there's probably about 200 out there now. Well, that's huge! Is it the same for the next two?

No, I would guess... I don't keep real strict statistics on this, but I would guess *Plastic Containers* is around 120, and the new one is just a few.

So why did the first one hit 200?

Because I gave a lot of them away. [Laughs]. Was it just the initial thrill of making your first tape?

Plus, I went against my better judgement and actually thought that maybe I could get a record deal or something. So I distributed quite a few to record companies... about 40.

Were they big companies?

Rarely. I think the biggest one was IRS. Most of the companies didn't even respond. Usually I got a form letter, and occasionally I would get a personal response, but not that often. Most of them didn't even respond. I got a personal response from Cunieform, they actually scribbled some comments on the paper. They're out of Wheaton, Maryland, and they've got a distribution thing called Wayside Music. They handle really good stuff. And I got a letter from Alligator Records, which is really absurd... they're a Blues label. They wrote back and sent me a Professor Longhair record and told me to get lost... they were very nice about it.

And what were the form letters like?

They're typically something that sounds extremely canned, like: "While we feel your recording has merit, it doesn't fit into our current needs." Or else it's a check-off-the-box kind of deal where there's different excuses, and they check off one or two and send it back. I did get two responses from companies in Britain: both of them said they wanted to use songs on sampler albums, and one of those two mentioned the possibility of a whole album, but those things are still pending. I'm not holding my breath. If they wanted to use some of the stuff on *Moslem Beach Party* I would want to try and re-do the songs, because I'm not real happy with the fidelity of a lot of that tape. If they're willing to put an album out, I'd go spend the money to mix it down digitally.

Did they tell you what they liked off the first two tapes?

One company wanted to use "Hey Darling, Can I Buy You a Taco?" And the other one wanted to use "You Can Become a Republican Too." Other than that, they didn't get specific.

What kind of public reaction have you gotten over the 3 tapes?

Usually favorable, but that's only because, if somebody didn't like it, I don't think they'd bother to write.

Well, you mentioned that "locally," nobody really liked the second tape...

A few people liked it, it's just that people seem to like *Moslem Beach Party*; particularly "Kill For God." That's my "Free Bird," I guess. Neither of the tapes was a local "phenom" or anything; it's still relatively unknown. The local media has ignored me entirely. There's one record store here in town that sold quite a few *Moslems*; they've been really good. They actually put something out to let people know it's there. The other stores just stick it back on the rack, and nobody ever sees it, so nobody ever buys it.

Do you get any reaction from store sales?

Do people write to you who've bought 'em?
Rarely. I've got a couple letters locally. They usually hear the tape, and want to come over and use my equipment.

Have you gotten any press in Austin at all?
Glitch records, a local record label, has a little newsletter. They mentioned me once. They mentioned that I'd been interviewed in Damp magazine.

Do you find that you play to the public a little bit? Do you take the comments that you get from a previous tape and use those as you're making a new one?

I'd like to think not. A lot of the songs on the new tape were actually written before *Plastic Containers* even came out. I think what I do is just produce the stuff as it comes to me, and if it happens to be stupid, and people find it entertaining, then great. But it's not like I'm aiming at it. Maybe subconsciously. Of course I care what people think about it, it's good for the ego to have a bunch of people tell me it's good, but... at the same time, I do like the second tape a lot more. I'm sure there are people who would like every song to sound like "Kill For God." I think it'd be boring. Most people have a very short attention span: they don't want to hear instrumental music, for instance. Most people aren't interested in that because there are no words to listen to. They're really not interested in music anyway. In Austin, music is consumed as a social event; it's not a music event. It serves as a reason to go out and socialize, and show people your new clothes. I'm not saying there aren't poseurs in Los Angeles or San Francisco or any other city. Maybe it's just that I haven't found the right audience in Austin.

Back to the press for a minute... didn't you have a comment on your Sound Choice review on the sleeve of *Plastic Containers*?
[THANKS TO GEORGE PARSONS FOR THE EXPRESSION, "ZAPPA-STYLED TOILET HUMOR."]

Yeah. I wasn't pissed off by the review; I have a lot of respect for Frank Zappa, and I took it as a compliment. But a lot of the alleged reviewers in these magazines tend to think it's hip to take a back-handed slap at Frank Zappa, apparently because he's made a lot of money. I'm sure they'd say it's because of his childish lyrics, but I think it's because they resent him for having succeeded. And also, some liberals resent him because of his views on the labor movement and the women's movement. And I think the real reason they resent him deep down is that his IQ is twice as high as theirs is, and he has much greater compositional skill than they could ever hope to have. I hold Zappa very reverently, and I don't really give a fuck what anybody thinks of that.

Are there any other magazines you've been reviewed in?

CMJ New Music Review has been really nice to me. The editor of that magazine named *Plastic Containers* the 10th best album of 1986. It was right on there with Bruce Springsteen and REM. I was amazed as hell. I about shit. Scott Byron; he also wrote about me in Village Voice in the music supplement. He's a real good guy.

You obviously have some keyboard training...

No, very little.

Can you tell me your history in music?

My history in music is: in 4th grade I was a big

Hank Williams fan... he was my idol... and my parents got me a guitar, and started learning to play G chords on it. I continued playing chords on the guitar until about Junior High School; everyone started calling me "Country Joe." That soon evolved into "Cunt Joe." So I got mad and quit playing the guitar. And then in college I picked it up again... that was kind of off and on. Then I moved to Houston when I got out of college, and didn't play for two years. Then I moved to Austin, and everybody was in a band, so in order to "enter a Social Clique," I picked up my guitar again, and I joined a band called The Politicians. This was an angry, dirge-like band. Actually, 3 songs from the Politicians were on *Moslem Beach Party*. They were "Christmas Time is for Assholes," "Song of the Birds" and "Coathangerman." We stayed together for about a year, and then everybody hated each other, and we broke up. They've got a new band now, and they're wonderful, and I highly recommend them.

Did you play those songs pretty much as they appear on the tape, or were the arrangements really different?

In most cases, the arrangements were less involved, just because it's impossible to get 4 people to do that, reliably. "Coathangerman" was pretty close, though. We actually did the Michael Jackson part; we were always real proud of that. But we weren't very tight — you wouldn't want to call us a tight band, I don't think. We were pretty sloppy, but we usually offended enough people to make it worthwhile.

When did you pick up the keyboards?

I never really did. If I had to sit down and play something, if it wasn't just Doo-wop piano triplets, I really couldn't do anything. Most of keyboard parts on tapes, all the hard parts, are done with a sequencer. Occasionally I'll do something "live" if it's only one-handed and not very fast... then I can do it. But I'm not much of a keyboard player. I really have very little talent. I'm not a good guitar player either: I can't play lead for shit... I can strum chords and [Zappa-like voice] "...sing as I play. I can dance, I can..."

"...make merry fun all over the stage."

Yeah. Picking and strumming, that kind of shit, I can do that. Sometimes it takes 50 takes. [Laughs].

(JOE'S FAVORITE ZAPPA ALBUM IS "UNCLE MEAT")

This sounds like a Debbie Jaffee interview now, but... do you have any "Manifesto" for the Rudy Schwartz Project?

[Laughs]. Do I have a Manifesto?

Do you have any ultimate goal in mind? Even if it's as crass as wanting to be a big, famous star?

I really don't think I'd enjoy being famous. I guess if I were to have my way, I'd like to be able to write music for a living, but that doesn't look very possible, given my taste in music. So it looks like I'll be stuck with my day job. I am working with someone in Boston right now, they want me to write music for corporate slide shows. **That's right up your alley!**

Yeah, that's what I thought when I got the letter, but this woman actually wrote me and so... that's up in the air, but I might be getting paid for music here eventually, ridiculous as it seems. I doubt if they'll want my normal kind of stuff though.

When you say "write music," do you physically know how to write music on paper?

Yeah. Usually my retention isn't that good, so I have to get out the book to help me, but... like when Kelly, who played saxophone on the first 2 tapes, comes in, I have to write it out for him. "Kill For God" was all arranged and written out before he came in and recorded the sax parts.

Where did you pick up that knowledge?

Pretty much just from reading it in books; I took the normal music in High School, where they make everybody sing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," but I never took any formal music training. I just picked it up out of curiosity over the years. I've envisioned writing out lots of things for lots of horns, and trying to come up with some very complex instrumental music, but I keep having nightmares about spending months working on one piece of music, and then having a bunch of derelicts come in and not show up on time, and inevitably it would never happen just because... counting on one person to show up is bad enough - but counting on ten people is impossible. So I've never gotten around to it, just because I don't want to be disappointed.

Do you have an insatiable need to create? Is that what drives you?

I don't know what it is. It seems weird that someone would use up most of their spare time doing something that they're not getting paid for... if the alternative is watching "Dynasty" then I would really rather be doing this.

Did you ever do any songwriting before you made your first tape?

The only song I wrote before the Rudy Schwartz Project was "Christmastime is For Assholes," and I never even considered myself a songwriter because, if I had written those songs, there's no way I could have had them played, and after being in two bands and dealing with the frustration of trying to get drug addicts to play music, I just figured, "Why not buy a 4-track and try and do it myself?" I really had no idea if I would be able to write music when I bought it; I just figured, shit, I'll just go buy it and see what happens. And then, sure enough, I started thinking of things. It's just a matter of, instead of taking your 3 hours after work to watch television, you just have to sit down and try and think of musical ideas.

And when you did that, were you aware that there were other people across the country that were doing it?

No, I wasn't. There was one guy here in Austin who was selling a lot of tapes at the time, though. It could probably be argued that I would have never even marketed my tapes had it not been for him. The guy's name is Daniel Johnston, he's just got an album out with the Buttholes now. But he was selling his tapes around town, just tapes he made on a boom box, and he dumped them off onto Radio Shack cassettes, and he sold them in all the stores for two dollars. He was really the first one in Austin to do that. And I was close to the second, and now there's just dozens of bands. You go to the record stores and there's lots of local cassettes, and everybody's lost in the shuffle now.

Were his tapes good?

Some people think they're great, some people think they're ludicrous. I think he's an extremely gifted songwriter. The production technique is

kind of lax, but given the economics of his situation, it's more than understandable. The first time I heard it, it reminded me of... um, if Dolly Parton was a bag lady, beating on a garbage can. His voice kinda sounded sped-up. And then he started playing between sets here at clubs in town; he'd just play a few songs with just him and an acoustic guitar. And people just really caught onto him; they loved him. He played for a few months and then the success got out of hand: this guy was known all over town, but he was working at McDonald's. I guess it just got the best of him, finally. He was at a Buttholes show, and someone gave him some acid, and he had a bad time of it, and he ended up in the state hospital. His parents came and took him back to West Virginia, and that's the last anyone's ever heard of him, I think. Hopefully he'll be back, but we don't know. A lot of bands around here play his songs... more than 10 bands, the Buttholes included.

So how did you run into Dwain (of YU)?

I read a review of *Illusion of Control* in *Option*, and it said it was reminiscent of Zappa and the Residents, and it said the guy lived in Austin, so I thought I should call this person. So I called him up, and eventually we got together. I see him every one or two months... usually to use each other's equipment or something. He lives a couple miles from me.

How did you figure out that *Option* was out there?

A friend of mine named Dave Cameron, who plays drums for Glass Eye, and used to play drums for Brave Combo... they're a polka band; they're extremely good... anyway, Dave showed me an issue of *Option*, and I'd never even realized that a magazine like that existed. I come from Missouri, which is kind of sheltered. And then I noticed that they had tape reviews, and I figured, "Well, when I get done recording these songs, I'll put a tape together, and send it to these magazines, and try and sell it around town, and see what happens." A lot of *Moslem* was done without the intention of ever putting it out; some of it sounds pretty crappy as a result. There's a lot of crappy editing, and hissing, and things going on. Someday maybe I can re-do those songs.

And put it out on CD.

Oh, yeah. I'm sure Warner Bros. will be real interested in it.

I want to ask you about your overall musical influences, and also who you like who's more or less on your level...

Well, this guy named Dino DiMuro...

[Laughs]. Not him!

Really, your stuff and R. Stevie Moore's is the only stuff I've heard that really gets me off. I like Don Campau's "Pinata Party" a lot, I thought that was really good. But for the most part most of the tapes I get through the mail are shit. I don't want to print that, though! I'm just being candid. Well, it's not like it hasn't been said before. Yeah, that's true. A lot of people think, with some industrial noises and some fucking with the pause button for 40 minutes, they can put out a tape. I think that's boring as shit. I like James Hill's instrumental musical a lot; I didn't like a lot of his lyrics. I like his trumpet playing a great

deal; I wish he lived in Austin so I could get him to play on my tapes. There's a lot of stuff I heard on Don Campau's radio show ("No Pigeonholes," KKUP, Cupertino) that I thought was good.

(ON THE OPENING OF MOSLEM BEACH PARTY)

The guy's name is Jamsheed Agahi who does the little Arabic chant. He's about as blasphemous an Iranian as you will find.

Was he saying all sorts of blasphemous stuff?

No, that was an authentic Moslem prayer. What these guys do is, they get up in the morning before other people get up, and yell this shit off the top of their roofs, and wake everybody up. And if you act indignant about it, that means you're blasphemous and you can be castrated at sunrise. He used to live in Iran during the Shah's regime so he has some fun stories to tell.

(BACK TO CASSETTE FAVORITES)

There was a song called "The perfect Tomato," by Ken Clinger - I thought that was a real good song. I like YU's stuff.

Some of the stuff I get is not *bad*, it just doesn't grab me by the balls and make me put it on over and over again, because I just haven't got time to be listening to stuff that I think is average. If it comes down to it, I'll put on *Uncle Meat*. [Laughs]. I was kind of late finding Zappa and Beefheart. As I said, I was raised in Missouri, and in High School I listened to your typical "stadium schlock-rock." I liked Queen, and Styx, the most awful shit you can think of, just because there was nothing else available.

I thought Queen was alright.

Back in their fag period, I thought they were great. I think they really *are* effeminate guys, and I thought that Bohemian Rhapsody stuff was just a masterpiece in studio orchestration. Did you like Queen II? I still like that.

Oh yeah, "Ogre Battle." It's cool shit, yeah. Most people just resent it because it's Queen, and I really can't blame them, but... there was some good shit going on, really interesting studio technique. I saw them live a couple times and thought they were just hammered shit live, but in the studio they were interesting. Once they got past their fag period and went into their leather period, then they started getting real obnoxious. But about that time I was in college, and people started playing Frank Zappa records for me. It didn't take long for me to convert. [Laughs]. I went to the University of Missouri.

How long have you lived in Austin?

About 4 years, and I lived in Houston for 2 years after I graduated from college. I was 21 when I moved to Houston, and there was a lot more music available. There's a station called KPFT which is a sister station of KPFX, the Pacifica station. That station really exposed me to a lot



WAYNE BRANCH

of things I never heard before. Prior to that I'd never heard anything like the Dead Kennedys. The first Zappa record I bought was *Chunga's Revenge*, and I really liked that, so I bought all of them as quickly as I could. [Laughs]. It was no small undertaking, but eventually I got them all.

You were even able to find the earlier records?

It took a while, but I finally got a hold of them. Now they're easier to find than they were then, because right then they were out of print, and it was just impossible to find one in decent shape. **Beefheart, the same thing?**

Well, I learned about Beefheart through Zappa. I guess the first Beefheart album I had was *Trout Mask Replica*. It took me about 2 months to decide that I liked it. A lot of his stuff I don't like as much; he has some albums that sound like he was trying to sell records... but then he sort of had a rebirth with *Bat Chain Puller* and *Doc at the Radar Station*. Doc I would rank right in there with *Trout Mask*.

Yeah, it was the best batch yet!

Yeah, that's a brilliant record. Some of the lyrics on there just make me cream. [Laughs]. By the time I was getting into Beefheart, it was almost by the time *Ice Cream For Crow* was coming out. I'm a real late comer. I come from a very strict Republican household, and bringing a Beatles record in the house was grounds for castration, practically. I wouldn't dare buy a Frank Zappa record, so I had to get off to college before I could listen to anything new, anyway. **Back onto Beefheart for a second: I was really depressed by his slide into "nice" music, so when he came back with *Doc at the Radar Station*, I was crying!**

That's when you know you don't fit in!
Yeah! I would dance around the room to "Best Batch Yet" - it was like an orgasm!
I agree. The first time I heard that record, it was just, to me, a breakthrough. There's nothing else in the world like that.

Do [your parents] like your music?

They don't even know it exists. And I hope they never do.

That's too bad.

No, it's not. [Laughs]. It just wouldn't serve any useful purpose for them to know.

So you never send them clippings or anything?

No, I don't tell them anything. I told them I was in a couple bands. They've threatened to come down and see us play, which would have been really disastrous. The second band I was in would have been really good, because it was fronted by two gay guys who dressed up like women, handed out marital aids, frozen meatloaf dinners to the audience, and they'd simulate oral sex with each other while we played surf music behind them. The band was called the Technicolor Yawns. We could've gone somewhere, but unfortunately everybody involved was too stoned, and we never got any motivation going. But we were getting good crowds. We even got to warm up for the Buttholes once, so that was a big thrill. But I'd rather not hurt my parents. I'm sure a lot of my lyrics would hurt them. I'd rather hurt other people. Other Republicans.

Do you think religion is inherently worthless, or do you just take offense at the purposes that it's been put to?

Well, for me it's worthless, but I think there are people that it's very valuable for. If there's someone who's very depressed and has very few reasons for living, if it makes them happy, I think it's a good thing. I just think it's sick that some people like to exploit that and make money on it, and that offends me. But religion, it could serve useful purposes, but right now I don't think it does. I think all religions are basically the same thing: they're all an addiction, they're all a drug... it's just another way to elude the truth. And if that makes someone happy, then I'm all for it; it's the same thing as someone who wants to smoke pot - if that makes 'em happy, then fine, I'm all for it.

You've had stuff about mostly fundamentalist religions & born-again on your two tapes but then on your new tape, on "Nice Lawn, Asshole," you have lines like: "For God so loved you He severed both your legs in a car accident"

Yeah, I figured that would be misinterpreted. I'm not blaming God for anything in that song; I just think it's ridiculous for someone to get on television and say, "God has blessed us with higher income," and there's no scientific evidence to prove that God has given them anything, so in order to show how ridiculous it is for people to say that, I wrote those lyrics. It sounds pretty ridiculous to say God severed your legs in a car accident, because there's no evidence that God did that... it's just as logical as saying, "God gave us ten thousand dollars."

It didn't come across that way to me, because then you use the music to "Star of Wonder," which is about the birth of Christ, isn't it?

Yeah, I'm sure a lot of people would find that very blasphemous, and would probably

misinterpret it, but I don't really give a fuck. [Laughs].

Well, why did you put that particular music at that point, then?

Because it's religious music, and it fit well with the context of the song, musically. It fit two ways, so I thought I'd use it. It's not like I give this a lot of deep, profound thought, either. I don't really worry about people understanding what I'm doing, because even if it comes up and bites them on the ass, they probably still don't understand... even more importantly, they probably don't care. So I'm not going to worry about it.

Do you have as bleak a world-view as the song, "People Are Scum"?

It all depends on what day it is, and how recently I've watched the news. I think, in general, that song is disturbingly true. I didn't write those lyrics, but I agree with those words very much. **You delivered that vocal in a very Zappa-like monotone; I guess that was intentional.**

It probably wasn't conscious, it was subconscious. At times I blatantly rip Zappa off, and other times I'm sure it just seeps in. I listen to his music an awful lot, so there's no way it's not gonna creep in. There are places where I've actually stolen lines from him, but nobody's noticed them yet.

In that song in particular, I could have sworn that you studied his voice inflections to get it perfect.

No. There was no conscious studying of any vocal inflections; that's just the way I felt like doing it. I think there's other parts of my stuff that sound more like Zappa than that.

What about the spoken part of "Asparagus Makes Your Urine Smell Funny"?

The syrupy, doo-woppy chord progression with the triplets: right there is a dead give-away for *Ruben & The Jets*. I like 50's vocal music a lot, but it's only because of Zappa that I started listening to that stuff.

But not the spoken part? You weren't going for a Zappa-like voice during the fade-out?
No, not really.

Well, that's interesting. I guess you're aware you have a Zappa-sounding voice anyway.
That's probably osmosis. I'll admit it, I just admire the hell out of the guy. If people think that's dumb, they can go fuck themselves, I don't really care, 'cause they probably admire someone who's a hell of a lot more worthless than Frank Zappa.

When I first got your tape, I thought: "Here's a guy who likes Zappa, realized he has a voice like Zappa, and utilized it."

I'm real flattered by that, 'cause I've never been told that. That's encouraging.

Is there anyone else who's influenced you?

I like Eric Dolphy a lot. There's a guy named Wilhem Breuker from Holland - he has a large Jazz band. He's influenced by Satie, Zappa, Duke Ellington, and different kinds of Eastern music, and polka music... he turns this all to Jazz; they're just hotter than hell. I think they're distributed by Rick Ballard imports out of Berkeley. I like Mojo Nixon, I think he's cool. The Reverend Fred Lane is this guy from Tuscaloosa, Alabama - he's got this record called "From the One Who Cut You" - I think they only printed 500 of them. It's one of the best albums I've ever heard. I think he's God. I liked the Dead Kennedys' first few records a lot; their last couple, I think, have been getting kind of

boring.

How about Metal? Do you like any Metal at all?

No, I was more into that in High School. There's a group called the Mentors; they're the ones from the PMRC thing. I bought their record just because they were singled out as being as bad as it could get. I like that record a whole lot. Jeff Ling was reading the lyrics, and he said: "How bad can it get? Well..." He pulled out the Mentors and started reading this song about golden showers...

Do you listen to much classical music?

There's some Beethoven I like; I don't like his more popular things just because I've heard them too many times. I like Anton Webern's string quartets. I don't sit down and listen to a lot of classical music, I'm not trying to sound pompous. I despise fat lady opera music - that makes me wretch. Some the more modern dissonant stuff I like. I hate Aaron Copeland - I wish he had never lived.

Did you ever like Emerson, Lake, and Palmer?
Yeah, I went through that period.

I sort of ended up liking Copeland because of ELP... "Rodeo."

"Fanfare for the Common Man"?

Yeah.

Well, they pointed me in that direction, and I was repulsed. His music sounds like soundtracks for a John Wayne movie. It just bothers me, it just sounds too "American" and something James Watt could enjoy.

I think the John Wayne movies were inspired by Copeland.

Oh yeah, I'm sure it was the other way around. Maybe it's not his fault, but... that was my impression. Maybe I was being harsh when I said he should have never lived, that may be going too far. Ed Meese should have never lived - that's probably more appropriate. There's some Stravinsky stuff I think is okay. I usually like string quartets.

If you could set up the exact circumstances under which a person could hear your new tape, what would they be?

Well, I would prefer they not be talking to anybody. I would rather they be alone in a room with a reasonably good stereo; it doesn't have to high-fidelity to the max because my tapes aren't... I'd like the volume turned up to a reasonable level, so they can hear what's going on. I'd like people to pay attention to it before they judge it.

How about lighting?
[Incredulous] Lighting?! I would prefer to have them tied to the ceiling on a chandelier with a strobe light bouncing off it...

[Laughs]. You know what I meant! I find that when the lights are on and I'm listening to something, my eyes tend to look at things in my room, so if I have something I really want to listen to, I turn the lights down.

Well then, in your case, I'd like to have the lights down.

[Laughs]. But you don't...

No, I'm usually washing the dishes when I'm listening to music, so I have no room to talk... I usually don't have time to sit down and listen to music. If I really listen to something I might put on headphones, if I'm really serious.

Would you prefer that people use headphones for your music?

It depends on what song you're

talking about. If I did a shitty job of mixing it, I'd rather they didn't. [Sweetly] Whatever comforts the listener.

Okay, now here's the reverse of that question: how do you think your tapes are listened to? Do you think they're given a lot of attention? No. I think people listen to them in the car while they're talking to other people. Or else, they play it while they're washing the dishes. I doubt if a lot of people sit and pay attention to it. I'm sure I pay a lot more attention to it than most other people.

[Laughs] Well, I would sure hope so! Do people ever say stuff to you that indicates they weren't really paying attention to the songs?

Uh huh. My girlfriend probably listens closely. Other than that, probably nobody. I have no right to expect people to devote 45 minutes of their lives to concentrating on what I do. Whether or not someone likes it... as true as it sounds, the most important thing is if I like it. If someone else likes it, that flatters me; I'll admit it. I'm not crushed if they don't.

So you're basically doing this for yourself, and the distribution is sort of haphazard?

set would be to make a living off of this, so I didn't have to have a job. but that's unreasonable, given today's political and economic climate. I'll just have to be content with this.

But when you started out, you had the goal of reaching a certain number of people you saw in Opticon Magazine, and you fulfilled that goal, right?

I really had no expectations at all. I sent those tapes out, and I didn't know what the hell to expect. I figured there'd either be a review saying it was absolute shit, or someone would like it... I just had no idea. I really wasn't familiar with most of what was distributed in the independent network, so I had nothing to compare it to.

And what about your mailing to record companies?

I expected exactly what I got. I was able to peg that one in advance. Actually, just the fact that two of them even expressed mild interest amazed the hell out of me.

So it was an exercise in futility, then?

Yes. It's like entering the Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes. I gave a copy of my tape to Eric Drew Feldman (of Capt. Beefheart's Magic Band) when Snakefinger was here.

Yeah?

And... I never heard from him, either. [Laughs]. But he was a nice guy, I liked him. It's a snowball's chance in hell, even if your music is good... the quality of music and the kind of music that gets produced are two different things. I was just thinking: "You gotta try." I figured I might as well at least give it a shot.

What's your regular job?

I'm an electrical engineer. I write computer-aided design software; right now I'm working on software that will automatically generate test patterns for digital circuits... and I would like to be doing something else. [Laughs].

Is it creative work?

In a sense. It requires some very abstract thinking, but it's just not the kind of creative thinking that I'm interested in. It pays better. **Is it a high-tech position that required a lot of schooling?**

Yeah, a lot of people would consider it high-tech. A lot of people, particularly readers of magazines like Sound Choice, would consider me a sleaze-ball for doing it. But once again, they can go fuck themselves.

Did you do real well in school and get scholarships?

Yeah, I had a scholarship. I had a 3.6 grade-point average.

So, if you lived up here, you'd be the kind of guy working in Silicon Valley?

Not if I could help it.

On your new tape, did you fake the directory-assistance lady?

Yeah, that's my girlfriend.

Why didn't you just actually call L.A. directory assistance?

Because there was no way I could have recorded it; I didn't have the means to tap into the phone.

How did you record the fake one, then?

I did it through a parametric equalizer.

Wow! Good job! At first I thought it sounded real...

I'm glad. I thought it sounded kind of fake... I guess because I did it.

But then, there were two things: one, the "ring" didn't sound like an L.A. ring...

Yeah, that was a sample. I constructed a phone ring out of a sample from a Yamaha keyboard... it's as close as I could get.

Well, it works. It certainly sounds like a ring. But it's not an L.A. ring!

Only an L.A. person would know that, and they probably wouldn't even think of it. And the second thing: Suzanne, my friend, is a directory assistance operator out here... she said your operator tapped the computer keys too many times.

Ooooo! Damn! I should've known that!

Yeah, I'll bet you're really broken up...

I even faked the typewriter sounds. I tried to be so authentic, and then I miss something like that!

But the first time she heard it, she said:

"Yeah, that's real!" It was only the second time, listening really carefully, that she picked that up. I asked because you had her (the operator's) name listed in the credits, and I thought, "How could that be?"

Yeah, it's not like I'm trying to hide it.

But it was a great fake job.

Well, thanks. We spent a whole night on that.

What kicks in a song idea for you?

It can vary widely. It can be anything from a news broadcast, to the smell of my urine after I take a piss. Lyrically, it will usually be an event that occurs that leads to lyrics.

Do you tend to get your music before the lyrics?

That's kind of hard to say... sometimes I'll have the music and then put lyrics on it, but usually it's the other way around. Usually there's an idea, and the music and lyrics sort of develop together. If it's an instrumental, then it's something that comes to me while I'm asleep, or sitting on the sofa, trying to think of melodic ideas.

Do you have a cassette system of jotting down ideas?

It varies. Usually the first thing I come up with is what sticks. I've got an alternate version of some songs; like "Snot-Mouth Tweedle," that's the second version there... the first one, I wasn't too happy with. I've got enough stuff sitting around to make another tape, but it's just so dismal, I would be ashamed of it. I'm not gonna produce a tape like that for widespread distribution - it would be pretty bad.

How did you come up the Colgate commercial? It sounds like it's a few years old.

I don't know what year that was from. The commercial looked like a "Dick Van Dyke" episode. Rhino puts out these tapes of novelty things like dope movies, and sleaze movies, and they had this tape of commercials from the 50's and 60's. So we rented one of those one night, and the first commercial on this particular tape was that Colgate commercial. The minute I heard it, I just thought it was catchy as hell. It's so stupid sounding. The second I heard that, I decided I was gonna do it.

Did you remember it from your youth?

No, I'd never seen it before... I recorded the sound off the tape. Within a week I had it done. The woman who sings on that is the same woman who sang "I Married Bob."

What are your own personal favorites of all the songs you've recorded?

SOUND CHOICE MAGAZINE...

...IS A PUBLICATION OF THE AUDIO EVOLUTION NETWORK, AN OPEN-MINDED ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE POSITIVE EVOLUTION OF INDEPENDENT MUSIC, AUDIO ART, AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

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It's definitely half-assed. I guess ultimately I do it for myself, but obviously there's more to it than that, or I wouldn't even bother sending them out. **Short of a major-label record deal, how successful would you want to be?**

I'd like to have creative control over everything, but I'd like to have other people handle the drudgework... but that's asking a lot. I'd want control over the packaging, the mixing, the editing, everything having to do with the quality of the product. But things like mailing out postcards, I'd rather not fuck with that.

Would you be happy with R. Stevie Moore's level of popularity?

I'd be amazed if that ever happened. I haven't really set any goals, because ultimately I couldn't meet them. The only goal I could



Off the first tape, "Asparagus Makes Your Urine Smell Funny." From the second one, "Darling, Can I Buy You A Taco?" "Moammar's Tractor," "Tampon Louie." From the new one, I'm pretty much sick of everything on it, so it's hard to say, but... I like the "Bob Ewbanks" thing, and I like the way "Ben" turned out, even though I didn't write it.

That's funny... none of those are the ones that I like. [Laughs].

Yeah, those are the ones that most people don't like. Most people like "Kill For God" and "Georgy Girl."

I love "Georgy Girl! I think you did "Ben" well, but I think the original song is such a reprehensible, unlistenable piece of shit, that...

I couldn't agree more.

...even though you're doing it, it still didn't work for me, because it reminds me of the song, it reminds me of Michael Jackson, and

it reminds me of that movie I hated.

I couldn't agree more. I had the same feelings about "Georgy Girl" though; I think that's an awful song too. But another reason "Ben" got in there was that it tied in with Ernest Borgnine... kind of a last minute addition, it was almost the last song I did, but... the song on the previous side ends with "Ben" fading out, and then I thought: "Gee, why not do the whole thing?" And I really liked the way it turned out; that's probably the one song I still like to listen to. You never know what other people are gonna like.

What are your least favorite songs?

"People Are Scum," just because I think it could have been done a hell of a lot better. I'm not that fond of "I Put A Spell On You." I think it's a great song, I just don't think I did it very well. Off the second tape, I was disappointed with "Cat Litter Polka." It sounded better in my mind than it ended up. On the new tape, "Protect and Serve," which I know you like, I like it but I think

it could have been better. It's edited poorly.

[Incredulous] Well, there's no accounting for the taste of the guy that made it.

But that's a lot more difficult song to record, too, and that's why it's that way, too. That was a very involved song, it took a long time.

I can't imagine it being any better.

Well, thanks. To me, that was the one I was really afraid of when I put the tape out; I was afraid it was going to be the "weak" one. But I was so tired of it by the time I was done, that probably had a lot to do with it. "Snot-Mouth On the Beach" could have been better. Around here, people just love "Fog and the Dew" - I think it's because the lyrics are not too deep, and it's got a beat, and it's pissed off, and people can link up to it real quick. That song was gonna be an Irish jig when I wrote it, with a fiddle in the background. But I can't find a fiddle player or a bagpipe player, so I figured, "Well, let's make it a rap song."

Compilation Notices

This section lists information about various current compilation tapes in the works. Compilation tapes are tapes made up of several different artists. Quite often, a compilation tape will revolve around a theme, or a particular style of music. The people below are currently accepting unsolicited recordings for inclusion on a future comp. Most, if not all, artists who appear on a particular comp are paid in copies. Be prepared to wait several months. It might also be wise to include a SASE or IRC in order to receive a reply on the status of a project and the chances that your work will appear on one in the future. Submit your recordings on high quality tape.

IRRE Tapes, c/o Matthias Lang, Barendellstrasse 35, 6795 Kindsbach, WEST GERMANY, has just released a brand new "ambient/industrial" compilation (15 tracks) called *Welcome to Sleepy Eye*. IRRE releases several comps a year, for which, submissions are always eagerly accepted. **ECTO Tapes**, 5912 N.W. 62nd Terr., Oklahoma City, OK 73122, is putting together a Compilation of Residents cover songs. So send those eyeball songs on Hi-Bias Chrome now! Of course all contributors will receive a copy of the finished product. They also need a title for it, so send any ideas.

AUDIO VIRUS, PO Box 7150, Waco, TX 76714, is looking for participants of destroyed, harsh ambient, broken word-noise to be featured on their first project: a 60 or 90 minute comp tape with a 5 1/2 X 8 1/2 xerox booklet of extreme graphix and information. Send on a good quality cassette. Several tracks not exceeding 12 minutes (one track or several) plus art, info, graphix for a booklet. All those included get a free copy.

Woksa of ASPIRIN zine, 3614 N. 49th St.,

Omaha, NE 68104, is in the process of making more compilation tapes and needs help from bands that might be interested to be on future ones. "I can work with any area of music and sure I can get your band on one of the multiple ones that I'm making. Of course all bands will get a copy that they're featured on, only right to do so."

Co-Op Compilation Tapes, PO Box 10126, Minneapolis, MN 55458-3126, is a new independent tape label that intends to "....use compilation tapes to allow bands to be heard far and wide." They ask for: "1) recording of music, be it live, rehearsal or demo, with good sound quality; 2) lyrics, printed or typed; 3) any artwork or photos for possible magazine." All contributors will receive a copy of the comp they're on.

Porkopolis, c/o Ashley Allen, PO Box 3529, Cincinnati, OH 45201, is always in need of stuff for release on his ongoing compilation series. Everyone on the tapes gets a free copy.

Takin' it Sleazy.....

....with
Bloody F. Mess

My band, BLOODY MESS & THE SKABS, recently played at a combination bar/pizza joint in Carbondale, Illinois that books underground types of music and caters to a mixed crowd of punk rock types and students from the local university. (Carbondale is one of those college towns that plague the U.S.) The age limit for drinking in this place is usually not enforced, but on this particular night it was, due to the unnecessary presence of way too many uniformed and undercover cops infecting the area—because of Halloween weekend.

Anyway, by the time we hit the stage, it was well after midnite, and most everyone's alcohol blood level was way up. During our chaotic set, the place was going nuts, with beer cups flying towards me, pizza crust in my hair—like a monkey's matted ass—and peanut butter, glass and display window mannequins (don't ask!) covering the floor and most everything else.

We had a blast, and so did the lucky folks in the crowd. We even got an encore—which we blatantly ignored.

A couple days later, I was talking with another local underground musician and sharing with him the details of our recent wild Carbondale experience, when the topic of playing over ages shows and all ages shows came up. He insisted that playing over ages shows isn't as cool as doing all ages gigs, and that a lot of people are excluded from such happenings. I argued that I preferred playing clubs where drunken, rowdy weirdos lose their inhibitions and can be entertained and not be so uptight, and that my band is *not* your usual dime-a-dozen **HARDCORE THRASH** or **SPEEDEATHMETAL** band. I maintained that drunken, rowdy weirdos just can't relate to four guys who wear Metallica or Agnostic Front t-shirts, and play 500 m.p.h. songs

about faggot-bashing, moshing, etc....

Then, the next day, we were interviewed for a Carbondale fanzine, and one of the questions was, "How does a band like your's keep a reputation of being cool people?" Another went, "What would you say to a redneck, church-going, Republican, Nazi skinhead who might be reading this?"

I finally realized that we don't fit into this seemingly universal "Hardcore" mode of ethics. Our band goes beyond the "mosh" mentality, and our opinions are individual. I believe in the old saying, "To each his own." The controversy surrounding us has taken us one step beyond the old modes, and we've successfully taken loud, raw, underground music and combined it with visual, verbal, emotional, as well as sexual entertainment.

The Hardcore babies of today have all left one lame segment of society, only to create their own pretentious punk society. It's just one huge mirror, reflecting a pathetic and boring regimen of Punkdom.

A bunch of big, sweaty, bald stereotypes "moshing" in front of my pretty self only handcuffs us to their conforming image of the underground. I'll entertain the uninhibited drunks any day. Besides, to quote a familiar rocker, "I don't give a damn about my bad reputation.".....

P.S. 95% of the gigs we play are all ages.

Naturally, GAJOOB welcomes differing viewpoints on this subject; and, incidentally, so does Bloody. You can write directly to him, if you're so inclined, at: PO Box 9021, Peoria, IL 61614.



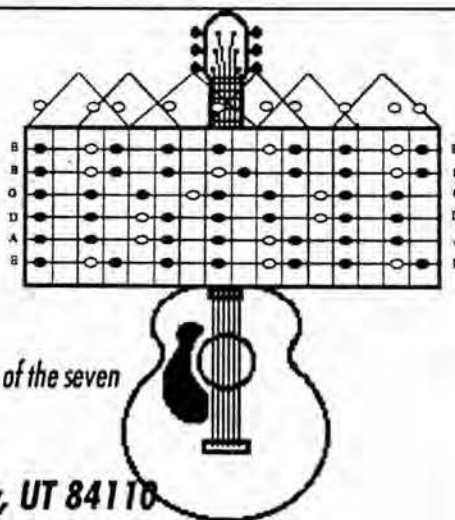
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ADVENTURES IN COMALAND



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Hark Terrarium Peppers

a noisy essay
by
Elizabeth Was

Noise is a moral illusion. The word pits sounds. A perceptual more' once removed from the stuff of aurality, a palette of ear juice washing colors thru the blood-brain barrier.

Noise is a personal thing, as much to do with interested listening as with nervous reactioning. "No longer a problem," psychological or social, means the ear has fallen asleep. *Aunt Jo fondly remembers the barn door squeak.* Machines singing songs. *Noise is simply hearing everything at once.* Long before the industrial age people were selectively hearing; thus, there has always been noise.

*"Depends what you're used to"
and: WHAT YOU'RE OPEN TO."*

Noise is a blatant interruption of passive hearing. An affront upon the sleeper, forcing a social demand to translate sound into language. Finding form in static. Or turning off the effort at an offering of label. "Oh, it's just the kids playing down the street." Today's noise is just as bad (or good) as ever: *ancient controversial relationship to habits in stimulation.* The computer-head still turns at the car breaks' screech, but in the event of a system error, certain small series of bleeps would be a jarring noise to his modern head.

*Noise is the sound of the itch when
you refrain from scratching it.*

The *NOISECULTURE* is always young but seasoned. They throw colors and watch dirt with fascination. The deep city is their home, no sound jars them and excrement is just another palette flavor. (Are they scared of peace? This the women wonder, who see that the noisiest are always male.) They hear the sound of their body only when it is without organs, plugged or pumped or boiling. The noise boys who exclude poetry shriek only rhymes without melody and la dee da. Yet, their strange, quiet aunt stays up all night, pitting and chopping sonnet forms, granulating alphabet, squeezing angst-stutters by her bed light.

*John Cage's silence = noise.
Both are very noisy.
The presence of sex is noisier.*

The sounds of certain bodily functions are unwanted noise: the culprit smudges the ear brown & gooey. Every "How dare you....?", "How embarrassing," "If you please," hush, shh. All gurgles. The smallest creaks of chairs having nothing to do with decibels or tonality can be psychoterribly nervewracking to the insecure speaker. One frown at the wedding could interrupt the joyful noise. In fact, party smashers come in a number of different flavors.

Jakpinos are noise to my father's mouth.
Or too much this too much that. Jargon, misspellings, run outs, run offs, even unexpected stops. Cigarette smoke, mix-ups, messes, fleece falling out, unmade beds for certain generations, general mayhem..... all of which can have to do with unfamiliarity, insecurity, the habit of being (as opposed to becoming). "Never becoming quite able to...." *Less than 15 minutes abnenoiseatedm yinnerbalance.*

John Cage proved that there is something to listen to, even in an isolation tank; and *that thing is noise compared to silence.*

The modern noisician constantly adjusts: Prunes, Collates, Sucks, Repressurizes, Releases tension to make room for more. No end to commas, the lack of denouncement means the sound never stops, even after the lights go out.

*"Jumping into things,"
In fact, all non-alcoholic spontaneity,
is considered Improper.*

With clothes that clash, *Noisy* is an attention-getter without cliché. A torn or upside down page. (Slide enough with the idea and the bolts start falling out.) *Crazed inklings propane my most symphonic personnae.* She's always sexy=erotically loud, although women aren't expected to exceed any limits. Annoyed more often than he is, however, I go on adjusting well after the position has passed, and so create my own head noise apart from the sounds of the room.

Another person's head noise can clutter the conversation, while in a relationship, habits of harangue can be the unrecognized noise obtruding understanding.

↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑

I write nothing for two years and then the noise in my head floats out in a clear, thick zigzag. *An octopus with its arms full.* A visual aliteration, like a terrarium of termites, reminds me about annoying loops, repeated sequences, things that "go on and on." People bothered by truncated fragments also swat grating ostinatos.

The innocent songster "stained the water clear" and so washed a wall of static into the literature of imagery. We have two friends who each enjoy fine tuning noise, but prefer not to make much themselves. One, however, is obsessed with the idea of dust, having once heard that dust particles are actually tiny, living organisms. The same generation that put cleanliness before godliness claimed silence as golden and the lack of it, smut.

*Imagine if the average cosmopolitan
actually started listening to every simultaneous
sound that existed?* A world full of nuts! (And a worm in every apple!) The abolishment of vacuum cleaners, cotton balls and hairpins!

Certain shades of red, The Future itself, unnoticed screams, unwanted ejaculations, isolated instances, public disturbance, broken ordinances = *socio-political-psychological noise!* Anything that doesn't make sense. Illusion. Mistaking. Gushing in the wrong direction. Turning heads. Neighborhood kids smashing other's TV.

*Juicy words more things than not are
a noisician's delight!*

When noise is "accepted," it is no longer noise. Or all sound is noise. There are sounds in the western world we identify with music that were once heard of as noise: the use of a major or minor third was considered abhorrent; sacrilegious, in the liturgical age. People have been clubbed to death for the utterance of certain words, let alone, whacking a city dumpster to hear the sound it makes.

More: "There is a proper time and place for that." Drumming on the table in a quiet restaurant, practicing violin concertos at 4 a.m. in an apartment building, singing in the supermarket.... to the disturbed ear, even all this is noise.

Let there be noise!





Consisting of addresses, zines, distributors, organizers, organizations, and other notes of interest, etc. that have been passed on to me, via notes and various other enclosures. You should also make a note of the change of addresses at the end of this column. Just thought I ought to pass them on somehow....

✓**American Festival of Microtonal Music**, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012, is putting on several concerts throughout the next year, mostly in New York City, but they're also conducting a festival in Seattle. AFMM also communicates microtonal music in various other ways. Write to them if you're interested.

✓**Jaudiced Eye**, "The Journal of the Underside of Culture," is coming, early Spring 1990. Looking for submissions covering the entire spectrum of the underground experience. c/o Dave Crowley, 307 Broadwood Dr., Rockville, MD 20851

✓**A Festival of Censorship**. Gallery X, PO Box 56942, Phoenix, AZ 85079, is part of *Art Detour*, a one-day tour of downtown artspace by the public-at-large, taking place February 24 - March 16. They're accepting ideas relating directly/indirectly to the theme of censorship. Include SASE for documentation.

✓**Gallery X**, (see address above), is interested in hosting performance artists, experimental bands, marginal writers and/or showing underground film/video. Etc. Etc.

✓**Dino DiMuro** was awarded an Emmy in sound editing. He is also one of the editors in Al Pacino's *Sea of Love*.

✓**MY WAY**, c/o U. Gernand, Finkenstrasse 8, 4709 Bergkamen, W GERMANY, is an independent fanzine that reviews tapes among other things.

✓**Thomas Sommer**, Martin Luther Strasse 65, 7000 Stuttgart 50, W GERMANY.

✓**J.R. Bruun**, Heiryggen 2, N-8614 Ytteren, NORWAY, runs the **HYPERTONIA** tape label.

4A moment of silence please—**Barefoot & Pregnant** are no more..... sniff, sniff.

✓**ZNS-Tapes**, c/o Andreas Scholz, Luchsweg 19, 4630 Bochum 7, W GERMANY.

✓**Frank Milautzcki**, Limesstr. 8, 8763 Klingenberg, W GERMANY, has a free catalog (send IRCs).

✓**Stick it in Your Ear**, Siiye HQ. 5 Sunvale Close, Sholing, Southampton, SO2 8LX, HANTS bills itself as the only European review magazine that is totally devoted to independent cassettes, and guarantees to include *every* cassette that is sent to them for review in the mag. I've heard that somewhere before....

✓**SYNTHESIS**, 219 Napfle St., Philadelphia, PA 19111 wants to know that a market exists for a newsletter devoted solely to electronic musicians and their fans, and what you expect from such a publication. Comments and other general information regarding electronic music from artists and fans is also needed to make the newsletter possible.

✓**ASPIRIN zine**, c/o Woksa, 3614 N. 49th St., Omaha, NE 68104, is looking for bands needing tapes distributed in the U.S.

ADDRESS CHANGES

✓**Leela Rasa Services**, c/o Danny has moved to PO Box 339, Vergennes, VT. Make a note of it.

✓**XKurzhen Sound**, c/o Michael Jackson has also moved. The new address is: 216 Adams St., Newton, MA 02158. Make a note of this also.

✓**Phillip Lollar** of The Skeleton Quarterly and Devil Dog has moved to PO Box 411021, San Francisco, CA 94141.

✓**Nick** of Black Rock Baby House has moved to: 529 Kinsmoor Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46807.

Home Recording:

Where It's Been, Where It's Going

by

Lawrence Salvatore

Most of my make-up comes from a little shop in Milan, Italy, that imports fantastic colored powders and creams from Sweden (I'm not telling the name of the store, however!). Basic essentials also include white rice powder from Tokyo's Woolworth's equivalent, Indian Kohl -- usually in black, for my eyes, which smudge right along the lash line and sometimes a little bit on the outside.

I also use a very light liquid base, sometimes white sometimes yellow -- and apply it with a damp sponge. For stage, I'll often use an iridescent base, usually pure white.

Eight hour cream by Elizabeth Arden is what you'll see shining up my lips and eyelids in photographs, it gives that extra-gloss effect. And a must is that old-fashioned black mascara, (sometimes blue)-, you know, the kind that you spit on the little brush and it's in cream/cake form.... I'll often paint waves of color all the way across my eyes and eyebrows, rather than on the lids only -- usually in a pink or mauve tone.

Once in a while I'll use pearlized gloss on my lips in a tan/pink that comes across like a white-silver highlight.

As far as off-stage make-up is concerned, I don't wear any base; I use a light natural moisturizer with rice powder dusted on top -- but most often I prefer to show my very light, bare, mid-Western skin.



Publication Reviews

A ☐ next to the publication's name below indicates that the publication reviews cassettes.

Arrested Development

c/o Brian Staker, 1247 University Village, Salt Lake City, UT 84107

Brian likes to endlessly play with words. Interplay. Play-along. Long play. Play ahead. Playmate. This one starts out with a fake table of contents and goes from there. Lots of stuff I don't understand — so it's probably deep and quite intellectual. But probably not. Saw Brian at a recent poetry reading and he really gives life to the words he writes. I'd like to see more of that here. He wants contributions.....

Artware Catalog

Summer 1989

c/o Uwe Hamm-Furholter, Taunusstrasse 38, D-6200 Wiesbaden, WEST GERMANY

Consisting of 54 pages of records, cassettes & CDs; 16 pages of videos and 34 pages of publications, all of which are mostly in the electronic experimental genre. This is very, very impressive, and highly recommended to those of you interested in such things.

Blow Torch

Number One—25¢

c/o High Improbability International, Rodney E. Griffith, PO Box 523, Columbia Station, OH 44028

A mini with a collage look. A letter from John Carroll University about Rodney's comments on what appears to be a radio show or something, an Anthony Michael Hall sex video news release and commentary and some neat graphics.

Number Two—25¢

The title of issue #2 of this mini is "Who Killed John Lennon," but, excepting the quote on the inside cover, that's about all that we get—which is cool. Besides the quote, there's a short called "Toome Trouble," a very short excerpt from a musical(?) and a page of collage graphics. Rodney is a veritable mind-game master in his stories.

Cluttered Mind

#1—\$4

Really liked this one. I like Pawnee Ribber's writing style. There's humor a plenty to be found here. Home-made style. Comics. And whatever else he could find. Just one tape review, acutally (though there is a band bio too); but it's a start. This one should go far in the creativity department.

Crawl or Die!

Vol. 4 #8—stamp

c/o Rev. Scott Miller, PO Box 8531, Salem, MA 01971
Subtitled, "A sordid scrapbook & deviant guide to puerile po(o)p culture," and, "The Rock Magazine for the Florence Henderson Generation." This issue contains lots of personal-

type letters (with biting replies), a description of Miller's recent return to the DC scene, record reviews, '88 year in review. Miller writes in a homey kind of style: "Crawl or Die! be published 'well, kinda irregularly, y'know?' by one Rev. Scott 'Bullethead' Miller & am available for any honest correspondence (I do dis rag as an attempt to communicate, y'know?)." Kinda endearing, sorta imitating—but all done with a very honest voice. I also received issue #7, which is his "Nastiness-4-the-Sake-O-It" issue—a Richard Speck interview, along with lots of similar stuff. Very good.

DAH JILT ART MAGAZINE

#2—\$2

PO Box 87128, Atlanta, GA 30337

Okay, so this is a bunch of art, along with a couple poems thrown in for good measure. But this issue focuses on industrial art, and for that reason (and the fact that each photo, drawing, collage is quite striking) this magazine works. Editor Terrence Brannon has put together quite a display here of industrial art that is more imagery than pure shock-value.

Decapitated Catfish

2 Stamps (I guess)

c/o Katrina Kelly, PO Box 557, 18 Taylor Ave., Earlville, NY 13332

I always like getting this one in the mail. I think Katrina would be fun to be around. She's pushing the bounds of what a zine should be. It seems more like a newsletter to pass around to friends — and that's why I like this.

Dumars Reviews

#5—\$1.50

c/o Terata Publications, PO Box 810, Hawthorne, CA 90251

Book, magazine, audio, restaurant and occult reviews. Also a poetry profile. Denise reviews only those things that catch her fancy, and quite a lot does in this issue. Personal and informative.

Factsheet Five

\$3

c/o Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502

Another heap of zine, audio, poetry, t-shirt, video, etc., etc., reviews from the King of the Mountain. The Bible of independent publications, if you will. If you have any interest at all in alternative culture you should be getting this.

Fish Drum

#5—\$2.50

626 Kathryn Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501

Some writing pushing the boundaries of preconception. There are lots of publications around doing the same sort of thing, but I like the style here. And editor seems more approachable than most others seem to be, if that means anything to you.

Heartsong Review

#6—\$3

PO Box 1084, Cottage Grove, OR 97424

Subtitled, "Resource Guide for New Age Music of the Spirit," and that is the whole focus here.

Lots of music reviews which must meet these criteria: "independently published; not generally available in music stores; well done in production and content; including vocals in some form, or instrumentals created for consciousness expansion; contemporary New Age flavor, or traditional chanting; positive open-minded spiritual focus; absence of blatant sexism, racism or other oppressions." Very strong convictions for the New Age movement.

Hippy Core Fanzine

PO Box 195, Mesa, AZ 85211

Intelligent, well-written stuff from the punk movement. #6 had an interview with Fred Woodworth of The Match, an anarchist publication that dates way, way back. Lots of tape and zine reviews too. A few articles will actually make you think.

Ice River

#5, October 1989—\$4

c/o David Memmott, 953 N. Gale, Union, OR 97883

"Ice River is a non-profit, tax-exempt literary organization created to recognize emerging and neglected artists in speculative writing, electronic music, fantastic and surreal poetry, art and fiction." An apt description. Send your tapes directly to Michael Chochalak (PO Box 38, Cove, OR 97824).

INCITE!

#15—45¢ postage

c/o Tim Albarn, PO Box 649, Cambridge, MA 02238

More personal commentary on music and stuff in general. One of my favorite 'zines.

JAM Magazine

Free Locally

1935 South Main Street #518, Salt Lake City, UT 84115

Very hung up on the corporate "You can make it if you try" attitude of music magazines. Lots of things mainly to do with the hard rock/metal scene in Salt Lake. It's quite good at covering that aspect. But the corporate thing gets to be real ridiculous real fast. "So how do you write your songs? — "Oh, one of us just comes up with a riff and then....." Yeh, I guess that's all there is to it, huh?

Look-Within

#1—50¢

c/o Dan Davis, 4075 Minuet Circle, West Valley City, UT 84119

Another one of your average punk-oriented zines with heart. Lots of it. Excellent Klusterfux interview, especially considering it is Dan's first. Reviews tapes, so you might send him yours. Not just punk either. Open and intense. I'm looking forward to #2.

Mayfield Beacon

25¢ postage

PO Box 451, Collinsville, CT 06022

This is the newsletter of the Larry Mondello Band. It's got some news about the band and strange Farmer Brownish story. Newsletters like this are a great idea, and LMB does a good job with this.

Archie McPhee Catalog

Box 30852, Seattle, WA 98103

More strange gag stuff from the folks at Archie McPhee. Coneheads, Ninjaheadbands, banana noses, a ball and chain, rubber eyeballs, etc.

MISC!

Halloween Special Issue \$2.20

High School Comics, 4841 Birch Lane, Gilbert, MN 55741-9631

This one's fantastic! How 'bout three concurrent plots in a comic strip? "Ernie and Mel" was actually riveting. I've never experienced that before in a comic. Plus there's lots more fun. "The Haunted Shower" is great too.

The Otisian Directory

Fall 1989—\$2 donation

c/o IGHF, PO Box 235, Williamstown, MA 01267-0235

This is a directory of "fringe" publications compiled by Pope Geoff and Preacher Tim of The Intergalactic House of Fruitcakes. Also includes a couple other things like how to become an Otisian Saint for \$15, all done with a very genial SubGenial slant.

Paper Toadstool

#1—50¢ postage

c/o Duncan, 4946 West Point Way, West Valley City, UT 84120

Paper Toadstool is a mutation of what used to be Duncan's zine, *Growing*. To be honest, I don't really notice any difference. You still have your "underground" band interviews, poetry and quasi-radical viewpoints (Lars' rant against the Straightedge movement is quite interesting). Duncan says this zine will focus more on Art and Literature. As I have seen proof that he is capable of doing that, I look forward to that sort of change.

Photo Static

#38, October 1989—\$2

911 N. Dodge St., Iowa City, IA 52245

This is the plagiarism issue, chock full of articles and such about the merits of such and the futility of copyrights. PhotoStatic revolves around noise/experimental recordings and mail art type works. Very well put together into a cohesive theme. Lots of letters and outside commentary also. Recommended. Also on Art Strike until 1993.

POLYNOISE

Subtitled, "information abstracts for the ElectroMagnetic spectacle; radical codes for brainwave interference," this is a booklet of noise essays by Amendent Hardiker & Miekal And. Well written and convincing as far as there being a point to creating noise as art (or something less lofty, I guess).

Poor Robert's Almanac

#4—\$1

c/o PRA Publications, 461 N. 800 E., Provo, UT 84606
Intelligent, politically oriented magazine with articles on "Exploring And Escaping Sexist Language," "Feminism and Anarchism," "Society's Anesthetization: Tune-In Drugging," some Russian folk tales, comics, poetry, and short prose and more. Very satisfying.

Rhododendron

Fall 1989—\$3.50

2958 E. Louise Ave., Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Poetry and some short prose, intelligently edited by Steven Jacobsen. A love of the written work

shines through here.

ROWAN

Book One—25¢

c/o High Improbability International, Rodney E. Griffith, PO Box 523, Columbia Station, OH 44028

A mini-comic. ROWAN is the ultimate cynical antihero. I'm looking forward to more.

Sound Choice

#12—\$3

PO Box 1251, Ojai, CA 93023

Looks like Sound Choice is getting more professional of late—and I think it's getting better. Much more content to this issue than was found in #11.

Liked the addition of "News & Notes."

The letters section, as always, is entertaining and informative. David's replies can certainly be biting at times—when the times deserve such bite. Sound Choice's music reviews are among the best around—searching and revelatory.

Spinal Jaundice

#8

c/o Mike Jorgensen, 7647 S. Pierce Way, Littleton, CO 80123

Mike is the guy behind Dormant Utopia Records and the band, Black Cabbage. This issue has Gax N' Art, by j.z., Little Fyodor interview, Larry Boyd interview, poetry by Holly Day, lots of zine reviews, Baboon Dooley comic, Signs of Satanism, lots of tape and record reviews, Naram Sin write-up, and The Lyres interview. Good questions in the interviews, such as, "If you could attend your own wake, what would you overhear?"

Storefront Bar-B-Q

Autumn 1989—25¢

c/o Shawn Swagerty, 428 Ridge St. NW, Washington, DC 20001-4622

I really enjoy Shawn's writing. And this 3-page newsletter has quite a bit of it this time out. A trip to Manhattan to film Sarcastic Orgasm, comments on the upcoming equal rights march in DC, his car blowing up. Several tape and publication reviews, all intelligently written. You should be getting this one.

Strange Noise

\$1

John Rickman, 8312 Greenock Dr., Richmond, VA 23235

This one is actually devoted to Cassette Culture. A few reviews and an interview or two. I like the style, and John seems enthusiastic about the whole thing. I like that. Too many people tend to intellectualize recording to death. Not John. He's having too much fun.

Transnational Perspectives

Vol. 14, #2—\$10 (3 issues)

Case Postale 161, 1211 Geneva 16, Switzerland

Article on bioregionalism, disarmament, U.N. reform, book reviews, and, believe it or not, cassette reviews! Anyway, this all comes to us from a decidedly world-view perspective. This is a journal "devoted to compassion in action."

Void Post

#4—(stamp)

1518 E. Lake St., Minneapolis, MN 55407

This is the journal for the Little Lost City in Space, which is a radio program syndicated from KFAI Fresh Air Radio in Minneapolis. It

documents an imaginary(?) city that was established in space, but has since been forgotten and is making these radio broadcasts. The majority of this issue is taken up with letters from fans of the show. Sounds very interesting.

Wet Sex

#10—stamp

c/o Rev. Scott Miller, PO Box 8531, Salem, MA 01971

A mini zine. This zine reviews old records and old movies—not really old, but old enough to qualify as "old." Also contains a "Kit 'n' Kaboodle" comic which manages to take comic violence to another graphic extreme. I liked this one too.

White Punkurist CRASH:

a Bad Newz Papoose

\$1

c/o Bob Z, Sarris Bookmarketing, 125 E. 23rd St. #300, NY, NY 10010

A mini with tons of content. A letter from Allen Ginsberg regarding Jesse Helms' arts-control amendment, lots of poetry, collage-type graphics. Aptly

crude.

CLASSIFIED

Classified ads are \$1 for 40 words

DUMARS REVIEWS: the review magazine by Denise Dumars. Poetry, SF, Horror, obscure videos, unusual magazines, occult subjects, more. "Gentle, intelligent reviewing."—Mike Gunderloy. Sample \$1.50, four-issue subscription \$6.00. Make checks to: Terata Publications, PO Box 810, Hawthorne, CA 90251.

Terata Publications: publishers of THUMBSCREW magazine, DUMARS REVIEWS, shocking magazines by painter/illustrator Roman Scott, Jonathan Falk's A TRIP JOURNAL, much more! Send two 25-cent stamps or one IRC for catalogue to: Terata Publications, PO Box 810, Hawthorne, CA 90251.

IRRE Tapes. Barendellstr. 35, 6795 Kindsbach, W GERMANY, has 20 tapes available. Some great compilations (RAMBO C-60-THE BIG DEAL C-60-NIGHT & DAY (DREAMS) C-60), some split-cassettes (JAR LORD LITTER C-60-TOSHIYUKI HIRAOKA KRONSTADT C-60) and some special music (POISON DWARFS C-46-ALIEN PLANETSCAPES C-60) and many more! Please write for free catalog (an IRC would be fantastic).

Hello Out There!

Launching a mostly cassette oriented label and my ears are peeled for new electronic, experimental, psychedelia, etc. Compilation in the works. Send tapes to: Jon Booth, 540 San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001.

Tape Reviews



GAJOOB's



Tapes

This is a list of all the tapes that have garnered GAJOOB's highest rating in past and present issues.

Issue #5

John Bartles

Michael Bowman

Jon Diaz & Douglas Baldwin

Dino DiMuro

EGG

LG Mair, Jr.

Squidbelly Plegmfoot & the Pulg-Ugiles

The Dan Schaaf Ensemble

The Rudy Schwartz Project

The Sub Davidz

Triptic of a Pastel Fern

All Coverz

From the Pages of Experimental Musical Instruments

USA Goes Pop

Issue #4

Ken Clinger

Dino DiMuro

Robert Musso

Studio Animals

Sublime Wedge

ZXQ

Orange Album

Fuzzy Logic

Live at the Independent Eye

Rivalry Insanity

Smell Me Fist and the Summer of Lust

Symphony #3 -- "Cadaqueo"

Mass Murder 101

Metropolis

Bowling For Appliances

Sublime

Fisty Stealth

Comp

Comp

Comp

Hullo, Is Your Refrigerator Running?

A Real Pretty Rose

Absolute Music

A Private Studio Compilation

Sublime Wedge

ZXQ



Notes on the reviews in this issue.....

DEADLINES

Deadline for Issue #6 is April Fool's Day 1990.

ADDITIONAL REVIEW FEATURES FOR ISSUE #5

I have instituted three additional features in the reviews below. First, is a **Sound Quality Rating**. The categories I have chosen are: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor and Unlistenable. I believe, for the most part, that sound quality should not be a deciding factor in your decision to expose yourself to an artist's work. Many enjoyable and challenging works may suffer from a low quality recording, and yet the greatness of the work itself will shine through. At the same time, I am aware that many people are hesitant to purchase a tape with unknown recording quality; especially those of you who may be new to Cassette Culture. It is also my intent to encourage people to perfect their craft. I hope those of you who are new to the world of independent cassettes will feel a bit more confident to test the waters by my doing the best I can to give you an idea of what it is you're getting yourself into.

Second, I've included a **"See also:" reference** to some of the reviews. This lists a few artists who are doing work of a similar nature to the work being reviewed. I've included this for several reasons. I believe it may be beneficial to know who your peers are, and perhaps expose yourself to other works in the genre in order to gain added insight to your own work. This reference should also give those who may have been exposed to the works of a "See also:" artist, a better idea of the reviewed artist's work. And, while I believe each of the works reviewed below should stand on their own merits, it's sorta nice to have a sense of community and the added strength in the validity of your own work this sense may afford you. This feature will be instituted more fully in the next issue.

Third, whenever it was possible to decipher, I have included the **year** in which a particular tape was made.

OOPS

There are a few tapes that slipped by without a review. I could blame this computer, but I won't. They are: Herman Guzanos' "The Rejects," Keeler's "Outward Signs" and "Mea Culpa's" "Worm Dance." They're getting a free issue in return. The least I could do, I suppose.

MAKE CONTACT!

As you're reading these reviews, I would strongly encourage you to contact the artists whose work may be of interest to you. While a review may be beneficial to an artist, in terms of unbiased insight, or to gauge whether or not the intent of a work is being realized; the most important benefit to be gained here is that it exposes these works to the outside world. For most of these people, it is the only way to get their message out. **Pricing** are shown after the Sound Quality rating for each tape— when a price has been provided to me. If no price is listed, this means you'll need to contact the responsible party for that information. So please make contact (and tell 'em you heard about it from GAJOOB, if you don't mind), and support their (and your own) musical independence.

Now, on with the show!.....

Guide to the Reviews

where the review shorthand is explained

.....

• **Name of Band or Compilation**

• ☐ Title of Tape ★ Overall Rating★¹

• Contact address

• **Style • Year • Tape Type • Sound Quality² • Price**

• The review itself. See also: a list of similar artists

.....

¹Overall Ratings may be loosely deciphered as follows:



★★★★★

★★★★

★★★

★★

★



Highest Rating

Exceptional

Very Good

Good

Some reservations

Even more reservations

Lowest Rating

²The Sound Quality Ratings may be deciphered as follows:

EX:

VG:

G:

F:

P:

NU:

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

Nearly Unlistenable

Now on with the Reviews!

40 Dog

□Yeh Right!

\$3 • Rosebud Prods., 44 N. B-Way #4BN, White Plains, NY 10603

Song • 1988 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for Price

Three excellent songs in sort of a rap/hard rock mode. The bass groove is strong, making these songs tight. Compositionally strong. "Heart To Heart Mode" is the stand-out for me, while "Just Say No" is quite humorous.

555

□Melissa

★★★★

NONOXYNOL-9, PO Box 7792, Rego Park, NY 11374

Experimental Song • Yr Unknown • Sound Q: G • \$3

Lots of different styls found on this tape. Noise, Industrial, contemplative songs. John Six is the one man in this one-man band, and this was recorded at home on a regular stereo. There's quite a bit going on, given these circumstances. Alien voices and bleeps filter through the mix quite adeptly. This one flows nicely and strikes a definitely eerie mood. Recommended.

Absolute Zero

□O squared

3146 W. 82nd Wd, Cleveland, OH 44102

Hardcore • 1989 • Sound Q: F • G • \$3.50

Semi-typical hardcore with guys so adamant about saying something... for the most part. "A Death in the Family" captures the loss of a family member, and the frustration of having not said "I Love You." Not a typical hardcore theme, I guess. Fans of hardcore might like this tape, because there is a certain energy here; and that's important, after all.

Pier Luigi Andreoni & Francesco Paladino

□AEOLYCA

★★★7/8

Violet Glass Orade, 6230 Lewis Ave., Lot 125, Temperance, MI 48182

Avant Instrumental • 1988 • 35min • Sound Q: VG • \$5

The liner notes state: "In June 1988 during the festival 'Time Zones - sulla via delle musiche possibili,' Mario Ciccio exposed his aeolian sculptures that, when blown by the wind, produce sounds. Emiliano Licastro has recorded and mixed these natural sounds and Pier Luigi Andreoni and Francesco Paladino used them as a sort of basic atmosphere for their work..." The sculpture makes a nice sighing sound, swirling in and out of the mix as messrs. Andreoni and Paladino work their airy, synthetic magic.

Wayne Baker

□Carpetbaggage

★★★★★

APT, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110

Rock • 1990 • Sound Q: Ex • \$5

I can't do an unbiased review for this tape. Afterall, Wayne is my younger brother. We slept in the same room for fourteen years, and fought and laughed together in a million and one circumstances. So why even review it, you might ask? Well, it is a great tape. Wayne's got an amazing feel for guitar that people can't acquire -- they're just born with it. It's why I get him to play on my

★★★★★



own songs every chance I get. It's taken several years of pleading on my part for him to finally put together this tape, and I'd just like more of you to experience it. Wayne writes rocknroll songs filled with passion. His lyrics tend toward a sort of manic searching and almost self-defeatist attitude, while the music he conjures up on guitar is often joyous, if not downright ecstatic. His rhythm playing is sometimes reminiscent of the old Smiths' guitarist (whose name escapes me at this moment). Lisa says his vocals sound like Ric Ocasek. I guess so. I feel uncomfortable writing this review, so I'll just end it here.

Baneemy

□The Walter Martin Cult

★★★★★1/4

c/o APT, PO Box 3201, Salt Lake City, UT 84110

Song • 1990 • 2 60min Tapes • Sound Q: VG • Write for Price

Walter Martin was a fundamentalist bible airwave evangelist. WMC is a pointed attack against his "answer-all" approach to bullshit preaching over 120 minutes of seamless wonder. Stylistically, Baneemy take influences ranging from The Violent Femmes to The Residents to The Beatles. Basically, the main instrument is a very melodic acoustic guitar, played with a lot of soul. Occasional keyboards rise up to round it all out, while all sorts of recording effects are employed with subtle skill. This is music for thought. Deep thought. The meaning of evangelistic greed and hypocrisy. What price Faith? This is not an attack borne of some sort of nihilistic frenzy, although a certain defensiveness rears its head on occasion. Loaded with feeling on a million and one levels. This is a must-have you must get.

John Bartles

□Orange Album

PO Box, 288, Springwater, NY 14560

Song • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex+ • Write for Price

This one simply blows me away. John Bartles' voice is strong in sort of a carnival side-show fashion. Hermanos Guzanos provide excellent instrumental backing on the first five cuts, while Bartles has assembled an outstanding cast on the remainder. Sometimes quite sultry, these arrangements really breathe. Bob Bunce's guitar work on "Bright Orange Nightmare" is exceptional. At times, these songs toy with atonality for atmosphere much the same way Tom Waits does on his later albums, and Bartles presence is just as strong. Very highly recommended.

Beefadelphia



□Me For Me and You For Me

★★★3/8

46 Park Lane, Lockport, NY

Song • Yr Unknown • Normal 46min • Sound Q: F • \$2 or \$3

A decent garagy tape that shows a definite love for playing songs. Beefadelphia seems like a young band still excited with every new moment of music making. This attitude is nice to hear. The sound quality has a do-it-as-you-go attitude about it that fits the

band well. And the inclusion of several covers maintains the live feel. I would expect Beefadelphia to attain a better grasp and more depth to their songs as time goes on; but that may very well serve to lessen the devil-may-care appeal and energy that this release has. As it is, this tape is a fun listen. *See also: Peppermint Subway, Devil Dog, Xtal.*

Bellas Artes

□Transition

★★★

Daniel Triana, 841 2nd Ave., Elizabeth, NJ 07202

Song • 1989 • Approx. 15min • Sound Q: G+ • \$3

Bellas Artes means "fine arts." This tape of three songs sounds extremely German. Perhaps a bit Bauhaus influenced. The style is actually quite similar to several bands in the Salt Lake City underground who are influenced by the same music. David Triana's guitar is heavily chorus/echoed and he employs a picking/chordal technique which is both driving and atmospheric. John Garcia's bass carries this drive further and Daniel Triana's drumming (both acoustic and programmed) provides a worthy foundation. A bit more musical exploration, perhaps; and definitely more diversity would certainly be welcome—and, judging from the talent shown here, Bellas Artes would make it satisfying. A good sampling of a band with a future. *See also: Dance Naked, 3 Men Pissing in the Rain, the Chimes, Fire in the Kitchen, Every New Dead Ghost*

Terry Blankenship

□Entering the Silence

★★★★5/8

OHP Records, 6411 Oriole, Dallas, TX 75209

Electronic • 1988 • 40min • SQ: Ex • Write for Price

Terry Blankenship has been playing guitar since he was ten years old, performing his first paying gig at age eleven. Among his accomplishments are playing with Robert Fripp & the League of Crafty Guitarists and recently being voted a Texas Tornado, joining the ranks of Stevie Ray Vaughn and Eric Johnson. *Entering the Silence* is Blankenship's first solo release. An instrumental tape performed live on guitar, this might best be described as subtle guitar orchestrations of a somber, haunting nature. The five cuts in this collection are similar from one piece to the next. Blankenship's technique, employing volume pedal and repeating delay lines, is really a wonder to behold. *See also: Mark Kissinger, Cephalic Index, Michael Chocholak, Robert Poss, Deathranch, d'Zoid, Robert Musso, Ken Rubenstein.*

Michael Bowman

□Fuzzy Logic



Black Tulip Records, 58 Cleveland Ave., Nutley, NJ 07110

Rock • 1989 • SQ: VG+ • Write for Price

I've been sitting here staring at this terminal for over 15 minutes, trying to come up with the words to describe this release. After all, it's only rock 'n' roll—you know? But Jesus, this is good! So much energy, it's a wonder it all can be contained in these crafty little songs. And Bowman's lyrics are all simple, yet sort of searching and broad at the same time. Sung in a natural, listen-to-me style; he goes from softly stating to telling us how he feels and that he wants the whole world to know it. Fuzzy Logic has a certain innocence that rock 'n' roll was once commonly known for; but it also has a maturity that rock has been struggling to express for over twenty years—a sort of Blues maturity, if you will. Michael Bowman also has a wonderful gift for melody, and his counterpoint keyboards and guitars may owe a little inspiration from the Cure or Lou Reed—but where the Cure and Reed somehow always seem to be struggling against their own resignation, Bowman sidesteps the issue and takes it home. He brings it into his heart and then opens it up for all to see. Some people might say that the fact that all this is the product of a single person is unbelievable, that rock has always meant camaraderie in an altruistic soul. But this is the stuff of personal expression, and what better way to do this than to strip yourself of all outside

influences upon that expression, and then give it all you've got. And Michael Bowman gives us all he's got with Fuzzy Logic. *See also: Don Campau, Uxoria, Xtal, the Chimes, Peppermint Subway, Devil Dog.*

Ric E. Braden

□Fear of Edges

★★★★1/4

41 Sutter St., Suite 1227, San Francisco, CA 94104

Experimental • 1988 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for Price

Fear of Edges is experimental in the John Cage school of experimentation. Random events dictating the unstructure of pieces. Juxtapositioning seemingly unrelated moments in order to relate them to each other. This comes with a booklet which makes the whole experience quite satisfying. I especially enjoyed the piece in which two conversations are mixed together—one is an old woman talking about a childhood memory, and the other is a young girl doing the same. I don't believe this could have made much sense without the booklet to guide me, but reading the text made this very fascinating. Overall, there seemed to me to be an open, almost uplifting quality to Braden's experimentation here which is unfortunately unique in a genre which so often chooses only to revel in its own confusion—and for its own sake. *Fear of Edges* certainly embraces the theories of chance; but most people don't seem to understand that, while hardly mutually exclusive terms, chance and confusion are different animals, and one should never be subservient to the other. I think Braden clearly understands this.

BYFIST

□Adrenalin

★★★★★

SABA Records, 11634 Woolcott Dr., San Antonio, TX 78251

Metal • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for price

Okay, this is definitely not a product of Cassette Culture. It's another case of a young metal band with anew recording contract, debuting their EP. But their record company sent this advance cassette to me, so I'll review it, I guess. And yeh, it's pretty typical, cliché-ridden stuff at that. But, assuming that's exactly what they're going for, they've found it here. This one cooks! and "Adrenalin" is the perfect name for it.

Eugene Chadbourne

□Country Music From the World of Islam 9 & 10

★★★1/2

Rock/Blues • Sound Q: G • Write for price

Sounds like a good time was had by all during this live recording of Eugene pulling out all the stops. Lots of variety, and it sounds like he's having a ball. Even pulls out THE RAKE -- merely for the curious.

Michael Chocholak

□Date With Kali

★★★★★

M&M Music, PO Box 38, Cove, OR 97824

Mostly Instrumental • 1989 • Sound Q: VG+ • Write for Price

Subtitled, "a soundtrack to the forthcoming adventures of Nik Ryogan, zen private-eye, as created by Mark Bilokur and Misha," this tape does have sort of a private eye charisma about it. Misha sings some poetic vocals on a few cuts, but this is really instrumental in nature. When you think of soundtracks, perhaps you envision incidental mood music, but "Date With Kali" should be approached on its own terms. These pieces are diverse and are loaded with character. I especially liked the guitar interplay on "Death 'O The Oil King." Highly recommended.

Vic Colaiizzi

□SEXLESS

★★★1/2

28185 Merrimac Tr., Williamsburg, VA 23185

Noise • 1989 • Sound Q: VG-UL • Write for price

Severe and intense noise. This will make you ill. It may even

make your heart stop pounding. No rest for the insane here. Hiss drowns out everything at some points, but that might be intentional.

Coz the Shroom

□SolidMud LoveGod

★★★

8000 Wykeham Dr., Austin, TX 78749

Rock • 1989 • 60min • Sound Q: G • Write for Price

Written and performed by Coz the Shroom, this tape seems rather enigmatic. At once it's both very physical, emotional screams of the heart; while also alluding to spiritual inferences. Almost jarring in this respect. At times, Coz shows a wild electric guitar, bordering on Jimi Hendrix-style riffing—no holds barred. He's even wise enough to forgo much else by way of other instrumentation. On a couple cuts, Coz settles down enough to show that he has an excellent sense for song structure, but the free-form psychedelia on many of the cuts here has its own unique appeal. See also: WALLMEN, Rudy Schwartz Project.

Dead Gods

□Without Heads

★

Delinquent Revenge, 3751 Little Neck Pt. Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Hardcore • 1988 • Sound Q: P • Write for price

Sloppy and poorly recorded hardcore without the benefit of originality. Don't bother, unless you like that sort of thing. If you do, and some people do, this is just the thing.

Dead Horse

★★★★1/2

□Horsecore: An Unrelated Story That's Time Consuming

Dead Horse, PO Box 262741, Houston, TX 77207

Hardcore • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for Price

Let me first state that those of you who won't give this tape a thorough listening-to will not particularly enjoy it if you're not fans of hardcore music. Although it is recorded extremely well (guitars could have been mixed louder, however) and most everything is clear and articulate, performed with a decent amount of skill and a good amount of energy—it's still Hardcore, ya' know? Fortunately, lyrics are provided, and it's here that you witness the truly passionate nature of this band. The band's name seems to be explained in the song, "Forgive," when it is said, "If you ride a dead horse, you won't be riding very far." Michael Haaga, the lyricist on most of the cuts here, is outstanding at approaching an emotion on a human, gut level, and then wrenching it dry. That's what Hardcore music should be about; but so often it succumbs to some sort of Preacher or Campaign shake-your-fist rhetoric. This tape has little of that. Even when it focuses on political issues. The lines, "Life is army surplus, one hundred thousand die, the U.S. army claims us for its filthy fucking lies; with weapons from Mattel, we'll surely rot in Hell," show a depth uncommon to music of any kind, let alone Hardcore in particular. Sure, there is a surface-level statement here that is very upfront and not subtle, and possibly somewhat rhetorical—but that makes the idea below the surface all the more effective. That being, that sending children, destroying innocence, to fight a war based on lies is such a blatant, black evil. It also contains an allusion to fascism and the molding of society in general.

Deathranch

□In Another Tongue

★★★

Skidloy, 1473 Redwood Dr., Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Experimental • 1988 • Sound Q: VG • Write for Price

Fairly straightforward experimentation by



Peter Leeming and Cliff Neighbors here. Keyboards tend towards simple line patterns, while juxtaposing differing sound sources amongst the synthetic playfulness. The song titles are generally foreboding, and you definitely get a sense of maniacal undertones throughout the tape—just enough to keep you on edge. I wish this would have been taken further, however. Deathranch occupies a certainly twisted environment here; but something more is needed to make it their own, I think.

Devilsfood Snake

★★

□

Platitude Music, 750-119 North, Indiana, PA 15701

Song • 1986 • Sound Q: F • Price?

Another outing where Jeff Jarvie employs his unrelentingly crude humor over instrumental tracks that sound so much alike they could almost be the same from song to song. Jarvie sings in a sort of sing-songy fashion. Half punk whine, half folk preacher. He touches on the wrath of Satan on several cuts here, slapping a "kick me" sticker on your back with a friendly wink of his spasmodic, glass eye.

Jon Diaz & Douglas Baldwin

□Live at the Independent Eye

☼

Art Clowns, 35 Caldwell St., Huntington Station, NY 11746

Instrumental • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for price

A lot of people experiment with the sounds an electric guitar can be coaxed into producing. The problem, I believe, is that most will simply leave it at that -- experimenting, I mean. Diaz and Baldwin do their own fair share of experimenting with electric guitar timbres on this live tape; but the structure here is wonderful, and makes the experimentation all the more fascinating and satisfying. They're not out to shock you with wild, amazing sounds or anything like that. But while they are crafting their sonic magic on this stage, you do get the feeling you're hearing the creative process at work here. The melody and sure-handedness just make it more enjoyable.

Dino DiMuro

□Rivalry Insanity

☼

578 N. Gower, Los Angeles, CA 90004

Song • Approx 30min • Sound Q: VG • \$5

This guy must literally spend hours fine-tuning each of the smallest of details in each of his songs. No matter how often I listen to this, it sounds different each time. Oh, sure, it has the usual DiMuro touches: sarcastic humor, wonderfully edited found recordings, shifts in style, gifted melody.... I've run out of descriptors for Dino. Just join the fanclub, like me, and find out how good independent recording can be.

Dino DiMuro

□Trouble at the Mutual Admiration Society

★★★★★

578 N. Gower, Los Angeles, CA 90004

Song • Approx 30min • Sound Q: G • \$5

Dino's humor really shines on this one. The title cut features a spoken break, outlining the requirement for membership in the Mutual Admiration Society. "I Need a Girl With a Walton's Face" carries a typically outstanding hook. "When You're on the Shit List, Life Can Be a Drag" turns the energy up a bit, while "Solio Deo Gloria" occupies cathedralesque grounds of wonder. I'm in awe.

Dino DiMuro

□I Have a Purpose

★★★★★

Lonely Whistle Music, PO Box 23952, San Jose, CA 95153

Song • 1988 • High 46min • Sound Q: VG+ • \$5

I Have a Purpose sees Mr. DiMuro exploring more classically inspired territory than usual. And, as with other avenues of inspiration, Dino pulls it off admirably. He never once lets you get too comfortable before he's off on to another tangent. Endlessly

intriguing. Of course you get the expected DiMuro bent in songs like "Robot Margaret" and "Marie Ann." "The Berth Suite" is a soothing synth break, written with old chum, John Gibson, who also contributes some scathing guitar on at least one other cut. A bit of a different direction, and excellent as always.

Randy Dyers' Diamond Child

□Created Image ★★1/2
The Furnace Room, 10556 Lincoln St. SE, East Canton, OH 44730
Song • Sound Q: G • \$4.50

First thing about this tape is that Randy Dyers is an excellent guitar player. No, he's not really doing anything you haven't heard before, but he definitely plays with some intensity and emotion. The songs are sort of psychedelic/progressive, early 70's hard rock anthem types. You know what I mean. And Randy touches on some religious themes in a personal way that wasn't too nauseating for someone who personally doesn't care for that sort of thing. Highly recommended if you care for this style. Dyers' guitar work may be worth the effort, if not. See also: Coz the Shroom, Spike

EGG

□Smell Me Fist ★★
3 Wesley Pk. #4, Somerville, MA 02143
Rock • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • \$2

I have a thing for vocal harmonies executed flawlessly. "Smell Me Fist" makes me slurp at my own saliva. And the structure of these songs, their execution and arrangements, etc..... this is really as good as it gets—and it does get good, believe me on this one. Sometimes the lyrics go for humorous effect, and sometimes they drip with poetic wonder. The guitars and drums are simply placed with a purpose towards the whole. This is definitely one of my favorite tapes.

Every New Dead Ghost ★★7/8

□
audiofile Tapes, c/o Carl Howard, 209-18 Ave., Bayside, NY 11360
Rock • 1989 • Normal 60min • Sound Q: VG • Price?

With song titles like "Deadly Passion," "Hope Cemetery," "Mother Night," "Bleak House II" and "Sacrifice," ENDG might be described as Gothic. If that is the case, then these guys are in a hurry to reach their final destination. Frantic, slashing guitar chords, spurred on by the somewhat breakneck drumming pace. Not speedmetal by any stretch of the imagination, yet, this dance of the dead has its own energy. A graveyard stomp, perhaps. Side two was recorded live, revealing that ENDG is a live band, by nature and execution. See also: Bellas Artes, Violet Town.

EXILES

□Breaking the Spell ★★1/4
Estoma Recordings, PO Box 4692, St. Louis, MO 63108
Avant Instrumental • 1988 • Sound Q: Ex • \$7

This is Exiles' 7th tape release. Jay Zelenka and Greg Mills attain a very nice atmosphere: a foreign sunrise, full of hope, yet apprehensive. Helped by percussion which is at times quite cacophonous (extremely active), this atmosphere fast becomes infectious. My favorite piece is "Currents," with its breathy, exploring flute. In fact, the flute employed throughout this piece is the perfect stranger in this strange land of chiming fate met with open eyes. See also: Warren Fischer, Isolation, Michael Chocholak.

Dan Fioretti

□Horns on all those dogs! Gosh! ★★
Donald Campau, PO Box 23952, San Jose, CA 95153
Collage • Yr Unknown • Sound Q: G • \$5

Dan Fioretti shows on this tape what a master of the collage form he is. There's a definite distinction between the several pieces on this collection, making it sort of a collage of collages, if you will. Interspersed throughout are some very excellent keyboard instrumentals. Very inspiring as to what can be done with this

form. Good Humor Dan strikes again! Recommended. See also: Pawnee Ribber, Kim Kauffman.

Warren Fischer

□Collisionmusic ★★★★★
Complacency, PO Box 1452, Palatine, IL 60078
Experimental • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for Price

This tape is comprised, for the most part, of violin improvisations. The violins are treated with just the right amount of reverb to give it sort of a theatrical feel. Fischer employs all sorts of techniques (plucking, etc.) and the imagery of the stereo picture is used very dramatically. There are a couple pieces which are strictly spacey synth diversions, giving the whole tape a good balance. The second piece on side two is tremendously frantic and wild. This is a wonderful tape. Highly recommended.

Fish Karma

□To Hell With Love, I'm Going Bowling ★★★★★
Added Recordings
Rock • 1984 • 60min • Sound Q: VG+ • Write for Price

This tape contains the studio version of "Swap Meet Women," which is something of a Cassette Culture classic—deservedly so, as it is a great, funny, revealing song about life and love and stuff, I guess. Fish Karma has an excellent rock/punk voice, and Al Perry's production and instrumental help compliments Karma to excellent effect. The songs here are all very good, with strong structure, yet seemingly free of any of the limitations such structure might imply. I guess it's just fun, and it's infectious, and I like this tape a lot.

Nyle Frank

□Greatest Hits Vol. 1 ★★★★★
Centipede Productions, PO Box 121832, Nashville, TN 37212
Song • 1984 • Sound Q: EX • \$8

This is a wonderfully easy-going tape of simple expressiveness. Nyle's piano is the sole instrumental backing, while Margaret King and John Adrian provide excellent vocals. Ms. King's vocals nicely interpret Frank's songs in a perfect compliment. At times, Nyle's lyrical poetry stumbles over itself in forced fashion and doesn't quite capture itself; but it's very nice when it does. "Long Dark Road" is my favorite song here, evoking a feeling of fateful resignation with a bit of timid wistfulness. The line, "Once thought I could run rainbows/Cross deserts in Summertime fame/Sow an October garden/Sail away with the rain" conjures up all sorts of images that play with emotion, leaving only the shadow of sight behind. Lovely.

Tom Furgas & Mark Kissinger

□Standing on Our Heads in a Vacuum ★★★★★1/2
something in the water, PO Box 485, Sharon, PA 16148
Rock Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Write for Price

Furgas and Kissinger really work well together. Kissinger's guitar work on Furgas' band, Courtesy Patrol's, tape, "Razor Clocks" featured some seriously searing leads by Mr. Mark; and that's the rule here too. For the most part, Furgas mines a groove with his interesting keyboard work, while Kissinger is free to fly above it. But this doesn't mean Mark simply milks the improv thing dry either. He actually maintains some structure throughout the tape. This is one of my favorite instrumental works.

Gregorian George

□Aluminum Jungle ★★★★★
Violet Glass Oracle, 6230 Lewis Ave., Lot 105, 48182
Experimental • 1989 • SQ: Ex • \$6



Many people in Cassette Culture are doing works of this nature. Rather meandering electronic excursions of twisted keyboard structures and found sounds thrown together to form a sort of musical entity for atmosphere in a new reality. Gregorian George just do it better than most. Attention to quality and detail, along with excellent craftsmanship play a big part in this. I like this one more than their previous two releases, but I'm not sure why—since they all cover essentially the same ground. Maybe they're beginning to grow on me. This has a certain life to it that is quite enticing. See also: *Exiles*, Heather Perkins, Bret Hart, Larry Ruhl, Shawn Swagerty, Drew Dobbs.

Bret Hart

□With a Tongue

★★★★1/4

Bret Hart, USAFS-K, NSGA Box 48, APO San Francisco, CA 96271

Avant Song • 1989 • Normal 60min • SQ: Ex • \$5

This is really one of the most intriguing tapes I've listened too. The instrumentation features improvised guitar of the twisted, skirting atonality variety. Bret Hart's a master at that, incidentally, and I'd recommend this tape simply so you can hear how wonderful this sort of playing can truly be. But the main attraction for me about this tape is Bret's lyric/poetry. It seems to bring the whole concept together—it makes it complete. Sometimes it doesn't quite work, and he seems to be forcing the issue. But when it does, as in the first cut, it's wonderful. Something you can play over and over again, and never tire of it—there's so much going on. Bret's home studio must be glowing with life. Highly recommended. See also: Private Studio, Daniel, Clocks.

The Dirk Hartung Combo

□Drained Wait

★★★★1/2

Darrell Draeger, PO Box 1425, Bakersfield, CA 93302

Improv • 1988 • SQ: Ex • Write for Price

This tape of live performances is one of atmospheric intensity. A testament to the use of space as sound. Hartung's tenor sax literally breathes. Piano, horn, bass, zither, organ, accordion and drums round out a hauntingly playful sonic picture. Sort of ethereal jazz, if you will. A solitary, flickering streetlight on the corner of last night and never. And the stale moon can't calm your raggedly feverish impulses. See also:

Bob Zander

Hellcats

□No Sympathy

★★★

127 Dahlia Rd., Livingston Manor, NY 12758

Hard Rock • 1990 • SQ: Ex • Write for Price

I suppose you might call this putting all your eggs into one basket. This demo is the Hellcats' calling card for making it anyway anyhow. They've certainly got what it takes, I guess—if that can be judged logically (It can't). They play a raunchy brand of rockroll that, unfortunately, seems to have been toned down in order to present their best, popular faces to the

commercial say-so's at all the major studios.

Hermanos Guzanos

The Rejects

Darrell Draeger, PO Box 1425, Bakersfield, CA 93302

John Hinds

□Forward

★★

□Blue Intensity

★★★★5/8

Omni Sonic, PO Box 786, Millbrae, CA 94030

Instrumental • 1988/1990 • SQ: G+ • Write for Price

With these tapes, John Hinds explores an intensely distorted, trebly guitar vocabulary which borders on noise and feedback at times. Often, Hinds will frantically drool out notes; but then seems to catch himself and let the moment slip away to go on to other things. "Forward" is just Hinds with brother, Peter on Drums and percussion, while "Blue Intensity" features help from others on a few cuts. Although the latter is still mostly a two-man effort, it seems to have more of an ensemble feel to its instrumental backdrop. This gives Hinds a broader picture in which to explore, making it more effective. See also: *Gentlemaniac*, Mark Kissinger.

Hugh

□Plasma Bat

★★★★★

Hugh T. Caley, Box 340, Metamora, MI 48455

Song • 1987 • Sound Q: Ex • \$7

Hugh seems to have a fascination with bats. No, he *does* -- he even said so in a letter to me. The songs on this tape are driven by some very tight synth arrangements, mostly in a rock/funk type vein. He's also got a nice, friendly kind of voice that slides into these songs with a natural approach.

Daniel Johnston

□Don't Be Scared

★★★

Stress Records, 4716 Depew, Austin, TX 78751

Song • Sound Q: P • \$4

Yeh, Daniel Johnston sings some heartfelt odes to pain and alienation here. No news there. But, actually, what surprised me most about my first real exposure to his tapes was his excellent piano playing. He's got a real rollicking sort of style that becomes quite infectious -- even though it's basically the only style he seems to know. He often shows an inspired sense of melody -- but the melodies are more often than that pretty much standard fare. I imagine he'd be excellent entertainment, live. Get this tape for the feelings Daniel evokes, and you won't be disappointed.

Kim Kauffman

□Jungle of Noise

★★★★1/2

20 Clawson Ave., Neshanic, NJ 08853

Noise Collage • 1989 • SQ: F • \$3 or Trade

Kim is a newcomer to the taping scene, having not known one existed 'til she read a copy of GAJOOB. Where's she been, huh? Anyway, she's been making some noise of her own volition, and as far as this style goes, it's amazingly similar to some other stuff I've heard. She shocks you for a moment or two with some decent pause-button-historonics, then steps back with some keyboard noodlings or, perhaps, a found text source or two. Recommended for fans of the genre only, although there are a few interesting moments for anyone else.

KEELER

□Outward Signs

Great Orm Productions, 496A Hudson St. #D-35, NY, NY 10014

\$8

A co-founder of Other Skies. This is Keeler's third solo tape. Has also had works on nine comp tapes on labels such as aT, Harsh Reality, Mystery Hearsay and Tellus

Kathy King

□Low Tech Nuclear Waste

★★★7/8

□Rubber Chicken Rides Again!

★★★7/8



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□Low Tech Nuclear Waste

★★★7/8

□Rubber Chicken Rides Again!

★★★7/8



Rubber Chicken Ent., c/o Kathy King, 636 Louise Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: G • \$4.85

Kathy writes, "The main objective of my recordings is to make viable music with the lowest of lowest in technology and semi-minimal playing abilities." What you get is some very fleshed-out rock-based instrumentals which revolve mostly around a nicely played and unassuming guitar. I quite liked these tapes (which sound quite similar). Loaded with character and recorded with obvious care. Ms. King's branching out is eagerly anticipated.

Mark Kissinger

□Narcotica

something in the water, PO Box 485, Sharon, PA 16146

Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: VG+ • Write For Price

Mark Kissinger is an excellent, emotive guitarist. You may have heard him on Courtesy Patrol's *Razor Clocks* tape, with his wild, distorted lead guitar biting into the mix with a vengeance. This tape is more subdued than that, for the most part. Here, you will find Mark exploring sonic territory with clean electric guitars and delay lines, often for harmony and counterpoint; and that's really where this tape shines—and is actually quite beautiful. Sometimes the drum machine, while programmed expertly, gets in the way of what you find yourself enjoying. And the inserted vocal text on one cut simply doesn't work. The final song on the A-Side is a wonderful Jazz-type progression. It's good music to hold someone special to, if that means anything.

Laughing Academy

★★★★

★★★★5/6

Camaderie Music Cassettes, PO Box 403 • Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215
Post Punk Rock • 1989 • 4-song • SQ: Ex • Write For Price

This is bang-ye-head, jowls to the wall music. Maximum intensity. Robert Fisher has the kind of no-holds-barred voice that can make a band; but Laughing Academy rise well to the challenge of meeting his energy. These four songs are all very well recorded by Mr. Curt. Tom King's drums prod and flail this driven assembly with a bite that will reveal your Uncle's bald spot. And Ben Paulos' guitar and Paul Austin's bass don't ever get lost in the shuffle of abandon. The lazy harmony vocals on "Say What You Will" are a nice touch. Good stuff.

Michelle Lemay

□Burning Up!!!

Dan Fioretti/Kitti Tapes, 312 N. 3rd Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904

Pop • 1989 • Normal 60min • SQ: P • Price?

Michelle Lemay recently wrote a letter to Sound Choice magazine in which she says she is an aspiring singer, and that she sings to people all the time. She also said that people tell her she has a good voice—she doesn't. The inanity of this tape gave me a tremendous headache. And Michelle is singing to actual pop songs (Madonna, et al) which are playing in the background. For those of you who may be wondering what she sounds like, this tape may whet your appetite—but you'll lose it too. Curiosity killed the cat, don't you know.

Llama

□Sampler '89

★★★1/2

Walter Wright, 5347 N. College #301, Indianapolis, IN 46220

Experimental • 1989 • Sound Q: VG+ • Write for price

Diverse, foreign sounds escaping through a subtle mix of fantasy and the depths of reality. Melodies come and go. This is not purely escapism, but may be used as such.

Machine Gun

Open Fire

★★★★1/4

MU New York Records, 111 4th Ave., Suite 5A, NY, NY 10003

Hard Jazz • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Price?

This is where Robert Musso gets to let his hair out. He does, and

he opens up those big cell doors of convention, prying at the strings of his wailing, protesting (and succumbing) guitar, along with the rest of Machine Gun. "Open Fire" is like a screaming statement of abandon. A bullet-riddled stop sign. At times, Machine Gun flirt with the chaos of noise (and win it over). At other times you simply feel yourself being sucked into the propeller wind of it all. Pop a vein.

LG Mair, Jr.

□Symphony #3— "Cadaqueo"

☼

□Symphony #7— "Selene in the Nether World"

★★★★★

307 E. 89th St. #6J, NY, NY 10128

Instrumental • 1986 • SQ: Ex+ • Write For Price

I got both of these pieces on the same dubbed tape from Mr. Mair, and their both very excellent pieces, indeed! Especially #3, with its sound effects that filter in and out of the mix of brooding synth textures. The sound quality doesn't really get any better than this — anywhere. There are some footstep sounds that are clear as (whatever). And playground sounds make it sort of eerie, in a way. Very highly recommended. See also: Michael Chocholak, *Illusion of Safety*.

Malok

□Estimate

★★★

Box 41, Waukau, WI 54980

Sound/Noise • Yr Unknown • Sound Q: VG • Write for price

This tape consists of two side-long pieces of sound experimentation. The sounds are often harsh, yet blend in such a way as to be quite musical — almost structured, but not really. Muffled cries penetrate the rumblings of tumbling madness.

Mea Culpa

□Worm Dance

Walter Wright, 5347 N. College #301, Indianapolis, IN 46220

The Larry Mondello Band



□Cassingle

PO Box 451, Collinsville, CT 06022

Industrial • Yr unknown • SQ: Ex • Free to Radio

This is called putting all your eggs into one basket.... and a bumping, grinding, chaotic mesh of riotous madness it is. Three selections for jaw-clenching laughter. These songs are heavy on the percussion and jarring instrument lurches with no time to lose focus.

The Larry Mondello Band

□Live at the Populous Pudding

PO Box 451, Collinsville, CT 06022

Song Lunacy • 1989 • Normal 60min • SQ: G • Write For Price

This sounds like a bunch of people getting together, possibly getting stoned, and reveling in their own quasi-insanity. There are some instrumental excursions (sort of Industrial, sort of Rock), interjected with pointless wordplay and such. Stupidity for its own sake, I guess. The whole is very disjointed, which could possibly be an attribute to those of you who like that sort of thing. The audience seemed to get into it at times, giving me the feeling that I was on the outside of an in-joke. See also: *The Idiot, None Other, Wallmen, Jim Hoffman, Leather Smile, Teen Lesbians & Animals, Viktimized Karcass.*

Mortuary Attendant

□Another Embalmer

New Flesh Tapes, 2837 N. W. 66th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73116

This is MA's first tape. Shawn writes, "It's raw and primitive (I didn't have any decent equipment then) but a lot of people liked it (even the bizarre black humor)." You get a definite sense of grade-B horror flick atmosphere here. Could be the cheesy, funeralsque organ running throughout. Could be the excerpts from old movie funeral scenes. Some of this could have used a heavier hand on ye ole editing block. The "Razor Blade" sequence seems overplayed, and may have been more effective used as an aside. "Who's There?" has a cool echoey, wah-wahed guitar. Hiss almost threatens to take over on this cut. Bringing the phrase, "Are you trying to frighten me?" a couple minutes into the piece makes it quite effective. And so it goes....

Eric Muhs & R. Michael Torrey

□Ant & Bee

Invisible Music, 118 Mattison Lane, Aptos CA 95003

Story/Mutated Synth • Sound Q: VG • \$4

This is the story of an ant and a bee, and their travels around the world in order to find some sun. To carry this children's tale, Mssrs. Muhs and Torrey have assembled a cast of voice characters and intermingled them with some great, mutated music. This is twisted, to be sure, and should appeal to us adults who like this sort of thing (I do). But it should also appeal to children, just by the fact of it's inherent lunacy and general sense of fun. See also: *Ken Clinger*

The Music Society

□Probabilities

15 Goldberry Sq., Scarborough, Ontario, M1C 3H6, CANADA

Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: Ex • \$9.95

The liner notes state: "These compositions reflect the increasingly increasingly personal relationship between humans and machines. *Probabilities* heralds the coming of CYBERMUSIC.... music created through human-computer interaction." And the atmosphere conjured up by this set of compositions is quite a bit more subtle in its created through Ringing bell-type ones play a major s e q u e n c e d approach than many other works human-computer interaction. timbres and sliding wind oriented role. There are some obviously pieces, along with a generous mixture

★★★3/4

of more meandering structures. And, above all, it's apparent that a human hand was involved here. Recommended.

Steve and Kristi Nebel

□Caught in the Balance

Penguin Records, 5109 Pt. Fosdick Dr. N.W. #E155, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Song • 1'989 • SQ: Ex • \$8

A husband and wife team whose voices express simple thoughts and emotions. Various styles like folk, country, ragtime and rock are touched upon in a very straightforward sort of way. "You Move Me" has some great clarinet interplay which makes it stand out from the rest of these very nice tunes. Sometimes Steve Nebel, who writes all of the songs here, strikes out into the political arena, addressing his concerns for nature and the like; but for the most part, these are simple, homespun songs, personal, and not just a little joyful. A very nice, unassuming experience. See also: *Dennis Soares, Acoustic Medicine, Nyle Frank, Joanne Rand.*

NICK

□Not Quite Right

□Wally & Jesus

Black Rock Baby House, 529 Kinsmoor Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46807

Rock/Instrumental • 1987 • SQ: VG • Write For Price

Both of these tapes divide their time between structured rock-type songs and simple instrumentals. There is a simplicity here which is quite straightforward and endearing in its quality. Nick's guitar lines have a certain homey style that I like, and that is rather common to other one-man recordings. Nick also employs synth-flute on several cuts in sort of an improvised, over-the-top fashion that soon becomes a characteristic. Side A of Wally & Jesus is dedicated to beaver, Wally: "A faithful disciple of the Bovine Philosophy," and Nick's pal. Surely firmly rooted in Cassette Culture. Very good, indeed.

Other Skies

□Vistas

Arcanum, 496A Hudson St. #K-41, NY, NY 10014

Instrumental • 1988 • Sound Q: Ex • \$8

Co-founded by Keith Keeler Walsh and Anton Tibbe. The music on this tape is "designed to appeal directly to the emotions." Walsh is co-founder of the electronic band Port Said. Tibbe has played guitar in such seminal NY bands as RPM Theatre, Thrust, and Solar System. This tape employess synths that often sequenced, sort of Kraftwerk-like, serving as a backdrop for Tibbe's searing lead guitar to soar over top. "Chasing the Dream" and "Covenant" are the standouts here, with the latter song's skewed distortion causing your senses to do a double-take

Ray Pearson & the Insiders

□Running in the Red Zone

Dynamic Records & Tapes, 1000 Clover, Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Rhythm & Blues • 1988 • SQ: Ex • \$5

This is done in the style of the Robert Cray Band, yet it touches on different genres also. "Running in the Red Zone" is an excellent, tight burner of a song, guaranteed to get you moving. Then, just as suddenly, the Insiders switch gears with a halting instrumental jam; and you realize that you won't know what to expect next. And you don't. Pearson explores some quasi-classical territory with his synthesizer on two keyboard instrumentals. These really need more fleshing out; full arrangements, perhaps. For me, it's the R&B songs that do the trick—especially Daniel James' lead guitar work, forcing the rest of the band onward. See also: *The Mockers, The Bud Collins Trio, Those One Guys, Barefoot & Pregnant, Jack Scratch, Fire in the Kitchen, Hermanos Guzmanos, Duane Isaacson, Gamma Rays.*

Squidbelly Phlegmfoot & the Plug-Uglies

□Mass Murder 101

Private Studios, PO Box 531, Wyandotte, MI 48192



Song • Yr Unknown • SQ: Ex • Write For Price

The band of crazies at Private Studios definitely hits home with this one, folks. Slurping horns, a chorus of characters out of some sort of mutated Popeye episode, guitars that consistently test the bounds of comfort, yet, residing perfectly at home in this land of ultra-fertile imagination. This one is thematically based around the lives of several mass murderers. Hence, the title. I really couldn't give a higher recommendation.

Platelet Heaven

□

★★★★★

Ken Glanden, RDI Box 49, Frederica, DE 19946

Song • Yr Unknown • SQ: G+ • Write for price

Stylistically diverse in an informal, garagey sort of way. Definite experimentation going on here. "Like Mornings" has sort of a Stones' "Satanic Majesty's...." feel, while "Dr. Ruth" is simply a fun reggae take-off. The drumming succeeds through all these changes in style, bringing life to the whole tape. Seems Ken Glanden played all of this, for the most part. Very impressive and highly recommended

Premature Ejaculation

□ Assertive Discipline

★★★

The Happiest Place on Earth, 4391 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90029

Noise • 1988 • SQ: G- • Price?

I'm categorizing this as "noise," but it actually rests far below that threshold of pain that so many other practitioners in this genre endlessly toy and taunt you with. This approach seems to bode well for "Assertive Discipline." You definitely get an uneasy feeling that something's not right here. Sounds churn and bubble up in restless activity. A meander of groans locked up tight (?) in a darkened room in the basement of your lonely house.

Karl Rehn

□ Electroponic

★★★★5/8

3001 Stardust Dr., Austin, TX 78757

Instrumental Jazz • 1989 • 35min • SQ: Ex+ • \$4

Karl explains: "All the instruments on the project are electronic; there was no multi-track recording used in the production. The entire project was done using synthesizers, samplers, and drum machines controlled by a Macintosh computer which was used to play the sequenced parts during direct-to-DAT mixdown. The concept of the project was to try to create sequenced, computerized music that didn't sound sterile and mechanical. The whole thing took about two years to finish, working on in my spare time in between school, gigs, and work." The first thing I noticed about this tape was how excellent it sounds. Then I noticed how well it flowed. There's a perfection in the execution here, and yet, it swings and sways like good Jazz of this type should. Well-suited in the Sunday morning sunshine, or a smoky, conversation and laughter-filled bar.

Rendezvous Debris

□ Uncle Dad

★1/2

Tom Burris, 2431 Fairview St., Anderson, IN 46016

Experimental • Yr Unknown • 10 min • SQ: F • Write for Price

Tom Burris writes, "This is a short, fast-paced journey through the mind of a child. It combines the music and sounds of my sister, Jennifer Burris, and me along with tapes Jen made of herself when she was between the ages of six and eight. Released out of disgust for the pretentiousness currently infesting cassette (& especially industrial) culture." What this amounts to is sort of a juxtaposition of innocence and degradation (sound-wise). Jennifer sings a child-song about a calico cat on the second side, while manic electronics vie for position. The whole thing probably only lasts ten minutes or so. Effective. See also: *Deaf Child*, Larry Ruhl, Shawn Swagerty, Kim Kauffman.

Pawnee Ribber

□ Ribberama (A Glorious Tape)

★★★★★

Box 255, Monticello, NY 12701

Tape Collage • 1987 • 90min • SQ: VG • Write For Price

More pause button craziness from the thinnest man in show business, using all sorts of recordings from old "Shadow" shows to cartoons to cassette letters from his mom...., broken up with actual songs and commentary at a few points. It's very much welcomed comedic relief indeed. In a genre that seems to wallow in human degradation and stupidity, the humor here was quite refreshing. This tape is 90-minutes long, and while even Mr. Ribber is afraid that may be too much to ask anyone to sit through, this definitely does not drag—because of Pawnee's definite mastery of pause button historionics in making the whole thing flow quite naturally from one snippet to the next. See also: *ZXQ, B Is For Bryan, Violence and Sacred, Drew Dobbs, Jim Hoffmann, Scorched Ear Policy, Wallmen.*

Pawnee Ribber

□ Ribber Tunes

★★★

Bret Berman, Box 255, Monticello, NY 12701

Experimental/Song • 1989 • SQ: F • \$5

Ribber Tunes sees Pawnee Ribber exploring more of a song-based bent. The instrumentals come off as mere experiments—while quite intriguing, I think they deserve some fleshing out. There is a sort of a "I wonder how this would sound" aura to these that is satisfying of itself. Ribber interweaves these with a few old-time songs with guitar accompaniment which are very good. I could stand a whole tape of that.

Roadkill

□ Guitar Vomit

★★★★★

Flying Bomb Cassettes, 277 Lake Ave., Worcester, MA 01604

Noise • 1989 • SQ: VG • \$4 or a blank C60

This is the debut tape by this one-man band of sorts. Matt Towler says he's not a musician, but the way he's compressed the various and diverse sounds found here in order to bring us this assault to the senses has a very musical appeal. Matt writes, "Think of it as a sound-effects record with a beat." More like a sound-effects record in heat, I'd say. What makes this noise tape stand out from the seething throng is the sounds Towler employs to create this madness. Especially the way he squeezes animal sounds together until they literally scream. Static has always been noise—it's not surprising; but this is a different beast, altogether. Good stuff.

Roots Radics

□ Hot We Hot Dub

★★★★5/8

ROIR, 611 Broadway #411, NY, NY 10012

Reggae • 1989 • SQ: Ex • \$8

The blurb states: "Roots Radics are Jamaica's hardest, most respected Reggae group. They have been together for over ten years, and have had a hand in the making of the best Reggae albums ever produced." I've heard "harder" reggae, but this one definitely mines a groove—and big. "Joy to the World" brings "Don't Worry, Be Happy" into its fold for a good mix. The dubs on these recordings are mostly excellent. Attention to detail is apparent. Side one also has a very uplifting spirit to it that I enjoyed. The first couple of songs on the second side sort of breaks down too far for me, and lose some of the appeal of the overall tape. Then "Watch Your Step" is even sort of eerie. "Come Out of We Land" is rather plaintive, yet determined. I liked this one.



Ken Rubenstein

□The Choreographed Stability of American Hardware★★★1/2
Exper. Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: G+ • Write For Price
More delving into the never-ending depths of microtonal guitar. For the most part, this strikes me as experimentation as its own end; but a few sections in this piece seem to have almost a sense of conception to their format. Other pieces stir around in a jumble of chaos, which is quite effective.

Die Sackparade

□the best of Harald "Sack" Ziegler ★★★
Donald Campau, PO Box 23952, San Jose, CA 95153
AvantSong • 1980-89 • SQ: G+ • \$5

This tape is a veritable parade of clashing styles, thrown together in a fresh, seemingly naturally fashion. Everything from punk to noise to pop, surfaces—and quite often all at the same time. Ziegler has a gift for melody and counterpoint which I wish was more evident here; but only because it is here. The B-side of this tape contains a different artist—consider it a gift. See also: Larry Ruhl, Dino DiMuro, Donald Campau, Fish Karma, Ipso Facto, Uxoria.

Lawrence Salvatore

□The Hallucinogenic Disintegration of Psychadelci Pop Orchestras ★★★1/2
211 Sout Hebbard St., Joliet, IL 60433
Song • 1989 • Sound Q: VG+ • Write For Price

Here's a bargae of what could be described as quasi-ballroom piano-based show tunes. But there's a lot more going on here also. Salvatores arrangements are similar throughout this tape - complex, throw out the stops, kitchen sink type instrument backing to his maniacal-tinged vocals. He's certainly singing with not a little feeling here.

The Dan Schaaf Ensemble

□Dancing Shoes

★★★★★
Cricket Forum Recordings, 319 Derby, Michigan City, IN 46360
Instrumental • 1989 • Normal 45min • SQ: Ex • \$7.50

Dan Schaaf seems to favor the standard classical instruments in his choices of the sonic palette. Cellos, violins, piano, horns, etc., are all featured prominently in these rather avant pieces. "Dancing Shoes" has a definite improvised feel, yet it also relies on a good deal of structure. Sequenced rhythms carry the day on several of the cuts. The piano is particularly adroit. Recorded in real time, direct from digital, this tape sounds superb!

The Dan Schaaf Ensemble

□Metropolis ☼
Cricket Forum Recordings, 319 Derby, Michigan City, IN 46360
Instrumental • 1989 • 45min • SQ: Ex • \$7.50

The Dan Schaaf Ensemble performs this work live for showings of the film. The work itself has a very large, dark and forboding mystique, befitting the subject at hand. As with "Dancing Shoes," reviewed above, the sound quality is simply superb and helps make the listening experience enriching. Schaaf's instrumentation also remains classically-oriented. Uplifting, yet resigned and almost forboding at the same time. Highly recommended.

The Rudy Schwartz Project

□Bowling For Appliances ☼
Joe Newman, 5404 Ave. F, Austin, TX 78751
Song • 1987 • SQ: Ex • Write For Price
This tape is wonderfully varied. Edited without breaks between songs so that each one dissolves perfectly. Definitely from the keep-



'em-guessing school of progressive rock. Newman's sequenced keyboards often flirt with Bach influences—and very adeptly, I might add. His guitar even sounds scored at times also. So much forethought and wit must have gone into all of these pieces that it makes my mind reel. Snippets of familiar melodies are thrown in to keep you smiling. Several of the songs have a biting, sarcastic tone to the lyrics that is clearly perceptive and delving. One of my desert island tapes, to be sure! See also: Dino DiMuro, WALLMEN, Ipso Facto

Semantics Could Vanish

□EUY ★★5/6
Audio Maxima OET, 1341 Williamson, Madison, WI 53703
Voice/Noise • 1988 • High 49min • SQ: G • Write For Price

Aka Miekal And & Elizabeth Was, this Semantics Could Vanish tape is mostly a noise collage of heavily processed voice texts taken from the book, "EUY," ".... presented as an audio soundscape as well as a noise opera about the futurist future." It's like the muffled, maniacal babblings of dungeon-bound prisoners. This certainly has a style unlike other tapes of this nature. Fascinating.

Mike Shannon

□Busking For Obelisks ★
Joy Street Studio, 18 Joy St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Noise • Sound Q: P • Write For Price

It took me a while to even realize this thing was playing..... well, almost. Recording quality is bad. Period. It's an interesting aside that noise tapes do, in fact, suffer as bad (if not worse) from low fidelity recording. This is because of the subtle nuances that must be heard in order for most of these works to work. Unless it's just a total barrage of mind-searing intensity. This tape is not. There is some subtlety that should benefit from a better recording. The technology is available, Mike — use it. Anyway, there is, I think, a nice flowing atmosphere to some parts in this work. The noise is more an underpinning and a sense of impending something.... or, perhaps, an aftermath.

Sheltered Mirrors

□Rain ★1/2
David Joo, PO Box 33, Stirling City, CA 95978
Industrial • 1989 • SQ: G • \$4

Perhaps "noise" would better describe the sound this tape makes, but there is some structure here, and many of the songs are driven by some almost manic percussion. I guess it's almost this and almost that. And almost interesting.

Silkworm

□Girl Harbr ★★1/2
B.L.A.M., 412 E. Spruce #2, Missoula, MT 59802
Song • 1989 • 33min • SQ: VG • Write For Price

This tape has a great, driving power that propels it from cut to cut. The drums and bass sufficiently hyperact with slashing, chordal guitars, enveloping these songs in a willing overcoat of streetlight integrity. Teenage underground. It's late at night at an all-ages show, and I'm feeling very alienated while the huddled mass around me yawns to break free; and no one sees the walls slowly cracking. Nor do I.... until they tumble down.

Sinister Attraction

□Private Wars ★★1/2
PO Box 85, Landenberg, PA 19350
Industrial Song • 1989 • SQ: Ex • \$7

Dark, brooding industrial songs of a rather manic nature. "Private Wars" has a tremendously big sound, using space and simplicity to excellent effect. Vocals are the done in a spoken/growled sandpaper kind of delivery—very topnotch. And the way that Sinister Attraction weaves simple synth lines within an anchored groove is quite tantalizing. Highly recommended. See also: The Larry Mondello Band, Schlafengarten, Deal Child

Smithism

□Prone

★★

Big Body Parts, c/o Jeph Jerman, 3031 E. Platte #2, Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Song... • Yr Unknown • SQ: F • Write For Price

A heavy bass occupies and anchors the center of gravity throughout most of this tape, leaving the guitars to roam freely about with quite a bit of abandon. That's what is good about this. There are some more percussive-oriented pieces that serve to break up the rather one-dimensional single-mindedness that pervades, but this is generally half-hearted—at least that's my feeling. Maybe it's the vocals that often sound bored and resigned. And maybe that's the whole motivation behind Smithism. It would be apropos, wouldn't it?

Dennis Soares

★★

□Crazy Dreams

Elation Records, 322 Bershire Ln., Stockton, CA 95207

Song • 1988 • SQ: VG+ • Write for price

Dennis Soares sometimes shows a very good melodic sense, and his voice is sometimes surprising in its range—somewhat akin to the flautist in The Moody Blues—but he has an unnerving tendency to let his simple love songs get out of hand, all out of proportion to anything resembling reality. When Soares keeps things simple and to the point, this tape works, as in "Candy" or "Just Missin' You." The title cut is an embarrassing display of wannabeeism. The songs sound typical of hyper studio craftsmanship which would hardly be a problem if Dennis could just allow his simplicity to work its own magic; because sometimes he does, and he's capable of some very beautiful sentiments. See also: Nyle Frank, Acoustic Medicine, Mike Conway, Mike Greenwood, Joanne Rand, The Silly Pillows.

Dennis Soares/Chris Rosten

□Direct Current

★★★★5/8

Elation Records, 322 Bershire Ln., Stockton, CA 95207

Song • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Write for price

A two-song cassette with a very well-produced sound. Chris Rosten sings "Nympho Maniac," the A-side. She has a very nice, natural voice; and juxtaposed with the extremely risqué theme of the lyrics—it's a good match. Clancy Ferrill's guitar pierces through this excellent, biting song. Dennis Soares sings lead on "Cauz You're Made That Way." This song is similar to the ones on his solo tape reviewed above. Unabashedly romantic. Rather refreshing really. There's also more power here. Seems that Mr. Soares is perfecting his recordings as he goes. His voice is excellent here also. All in all, an excellent sampling—and one which makes me want to hear more by this team.

Spike

□Save the Children

★★

The Furnace Room, 10556 Lincoln St. SE, East Canton, OH 44730

Religious Folk • Sound Q: F • \$5.50

Spike has been playing the streets in this country and in Europe for over 10 years, if I remember correctly. His press portrays him as quite world-wise, yet full of convictions at better this poor world of ours. This is a tape of a show he put on for some sort of children's center. I don't know... I just didn't get the sense that his press hyped him up to be. He seemed like so many other cutesy purveyors of religious dogma, masquerading as hope. No, thanks. And, musically, it sounded very amateurish (for his experience, anyway). That hurt these songs.

the sub davidz

□SUBLIME

☀

Big Harmony Records

Song • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Write for price

The lead singer for the sub davidz spent some time living in a monastery. He fills his lyrics with somewhat of a reality-based philosophical aura that is refreshing, and not at all heavy handed.

And the music on this tape a perfect blend of modern pop sensibility. The horn arrangements on "Magic Moped to Morocco" are simply exhilarating! It gets the tape off to a tremendous start which never lets up. The arrangements are carefully constructed, yet maintain a certain freedom and a natural flow, and Jagat's voice occupies the space as the emotion dictates. This is just a great tape!

The Symptoms



□West

★★★★7/8

What Hiss Music Co., PO Box 24115, Winston-Salem, NC 27114-4155

Song • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Write for price

The Symptoms are Tom Eshelman and Rhan Small. Tom writes, "The Symptoms are essentially a two man act who record and do performance-art type shows for the general public." So I, in my preconceived state of mind, was prepared for some artsy meandering of naturally obscure effect. And this tape starts out with three songs called "West," all done with a single electric guitar and a vocal—sort of meandering and obscure, yet very personal at the same time. Then, when what to my wandering ears did appear.... they hit me with a song called "Boot," and suddenly this tape was moving; and so was my hand—reaching for the volume control and cranking that sucker up. Whoever is playing guitar has a wonderful sense of abandon, along with a confidence that makes listening to it very enthralling. And the drums are breathing, damn it! BREATHING, I tell you.... The rest of the tape features many other outstanding rockers, mixed in with some more controlled tension. A little bit erratic, perhaps; and it definitely could use some more bottom end (an electric bass, maybe?)—but I'll be coming back to this one again and again, and I believe I'll like it even more as time goes on. It's one of those releases that bares repeated exposure with attention to its detail. See also: Solid Mud Love God, John Thaxton, Fish Karma, Jack Scratch, Devil Dog.

the Tape Beatles

□a subtle buoyancy of pulse

★★★

PO Box 8907, Iowa City, IA 52244

Collage • 1989 • Sound Q: F-G • Write for price

This tape comes with quite an impressive booklet, style wise. Lacking in the substance area, however. They do some interesting things with Beatle interviews (inserting "Tape Beatles" in place of), but this done very sloppy. This could have been intensional. It's one of those types of tapes. I gathered from the literature that the Tape Beatles approach this almost scientifically, but apparently this is a joke.

Totentanz

□

William Lengeman III, 193 Railroad St., Hummelstown, PA 17036

Punk • Yr Unknown • SQ: F+ • Price?

The first thing you notice about this tape is the excellent, strong bass anchor. Then you get slapped in the face by the anger of William Lengeman's angry, growling vocal; and how well it is offset by the woman's voice who makes up the other half of this team. Lyrics on this tape are very poetic and full of strong imagery: from "Navajo Woman"—"The stench of a Navajo woman menstrating on a bearskin rug, a school of fishes lying dead on the window pane...." If Totentanz get a grip on their recording quality (the power within these songs begs for a better recording, I think) then this tape and this band would pack enough emotional wallop to wrap your bleeding heart around your weeping spine. See also: *Dead Child*, Shawn Swagerty, Josef K. Noyce, GENCH, Jim Holmann, *Mental Anguish*, *Theatre of Ice*, *Viktimized Karcass*, Daniel.

Triptic of a Pastel Fern

□ 2nd Jefferson Blythe

Poison Plant, 7 Woodsend PL., Rockville, MD 20845

Instrumental/Rock Poetry • 1988 • SQ: VG+ • Write for price

This tape is loaded with tangible instrumentals you can sink your teeth into. The synthesizer sounds digital, as these come up with some real gnarly keyboard patches that offset some often more subtle guitar work. This stuff doesn't exist as mere background (that's not a slam against stuff that does). It defiantly demands your attention. My favorite cut is "Jellybean in the Pocket." The vocals on this are quite subdued for excellent effect. I liked this one.

Triptic of a Pastel Fern

□ Fisty Stealth

Poison Plant, 7 Woodsend PL., Rockville, MD 20845

Avant Inst. • 1989 • Sound Q: Ex • Write for price

On this tape Triptic brings in more of a sonic edginess to their work. Starting with the first cut, a sort of undertone of dread is weaved into these contemplative orchestrations. A definite mood is struck here, assuming the best of noise and electronic excursions. Recommended for fans of either genre.

UXORIA

□ Dead Relatives

Steven Boone, 105 Windsor Dr., Tickfaw, LA 70468

Song • 1989 • Normal 60min • SQ: G • \$4

This tape is truly a product of cassette culture. It's the product of the imagination of Steven Boone, and shows a simple joy for the act of creating songs. Steven seems to have been strongly influenced by Syd Barrett's revealing simplicity. "My Daddy Drives a Nash" starts the tape off with a very catchy melody and hook, and all the subsequent songs here live up to the promise this song implies. You can really imagine Mr. Boone sitting in front of his 4-track, crafting these lovely gems—which is part of the



★★★1/4

attraction for me. "Dead Relatives" strikes me as much more introspective than his previous release. Highly recommended. See also: *Fish Karma*, Al Perry, Don Campau, Xtal.

WALLMEN

□ QNEMLLAW: You Are the Wallmen Today

Jethro Deluxe, 7711 Lisa Lane, N. Syracuse, NY 1321

Song • 1989 • SQ: Ex • Price?

The WALLMEN are consistently one of my favorite independent recording bands. The breadth of their music is wonderful and always employed in endlessly interesting ways. This tape comes to us professionally packaged and duplicated, but the trademark WALLMEN style is all there. They tackle all sorts of music genres, from punk to noise to soft pop to psychedelia, yet always retaining their own voice. It also seems to me that they love the act of recording—experimentation is very apparent. At the same time, it's the beauty of the songs which holds the attraction. A must-have tape if you ask me. See also: *Dino DiMuro*, *Fish Karma*, *Theatre of Ice*, *Ipsa Facto*.

Warworld

□

Bradford Bohonus, 6301 Sunset Blvd. #101, Box 83, Hollywood, CA 90028

Industrial Core • Sound Q: G+ • \$5

This tape is also available on LP from RRRRecords. Distorted guitars interplay nicely with Bohonus' harsh, growling vocals. A world in war with itself, perhaps? Or simply decaying? Or dead and gone..... No, there's some spirit left, judging from this tape, anyway.

Brian R. Wells

□ On common ground

WCLR, PO Box 17121, Indianapolis, IN 46217

Experi. Instrumental • 1989 • SQ: VG+ • Write for price

A bit too imposing upon your consciousness to be mere background, yet "on common ground" sort occupies that space. The liner notes explain "Shilo," the first cut, this way: "....bones and broken memories under every tree. A scrap of melody braided into the pulse that drove them there." A very apt description. And there's a distinct pulse throughout most of the pieces here that carries you inside of them, to bounce against the walls and settle against a heap of stale, quivering machinery.

What Went Wrong

□ Anything and Everything

5707 E. 6th St., Tucson, AZ 85711

Punk/Rock • 1989 • 90min • SQ: F to G+ • Write for price

This is, for the most part, sort of an average foray into well-worn punk territory. These guys are into building up to climaxes, but never delivering. These are not songs so much as they are approaches at possible songs. Having said all that, "Everything (and Version)," the final song on the tape, showers all the promise of the prior proceedings down on your unsuspecting head—like a monsoon in an alleyway or something. This has got such power that I'm tempted to recommend the whole tape solely for the experience of the final song.

X Ray Pop

□ Zazzy Music

Violet Glass Orade, 6230 Lewis Ave., Lot 105, Temperance, MI 48182

Song • 1989 • Sound Q: G • \$6

On this tape, X Ray Pop perform rather simple, yet striking pop songs with cheap synths, for the most part, serving as the main instrumentation. Pam Pam's vocals (sometimes spoken, sometimes sung) have a sort of old innocence, making the whole quite effective. See also: *Ken Clinger*, *Larry Ruhl*.

YU

□ Illusion of Control

Home Productions, Box 14384, Austin, TX 78761

Progressive Synth Pop • Sound Q: Ex+ • Write for price

Dino DiMuro sent me this tape. Seems it's his favorite, and it's easy to see why. Diverse arrangements that twist and turn in an endlessly playful, yet rather biting fashion. Spoken/sung vocals over top an often hyperactive backdrop/foredrop of tight synth structures that never rest in any one place for long.

Bob Z

□99 Anarchists

Sarris Bookmarketing, 125 E. 23rd St. #300, NY, NY 10010

Song • 1989 • 20min • SQ: F • Write for price

★1/2

On 99 Anarchists Bob Z tackles a sort of folk protest forum in good style. You definitely sense his anger-fueled cynicism in these five very fine songs, delivered with intensity. But, for some strange reason, Bob has mixed this in an off-kilter way, so that the stereo picture is rightside-leftside-rightside-leftside....like a "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" sing-a-long. You know, like how you sang it in elementary, where the group is divided into several sections, and one section starts and after it sings, "... gently down the stream," the next section starts in, and it goes around and around. These songs would just work better if they were given to us straightforward.

ZZAJ-Art

□Vol. One, Fall 1989

★★★★1/4

Dick Metcalf, HHC - 19th SUPCOM, PO Box 2879, APO San Francisco, CA 96218

AGarde Instrumental • 1989 • Sound Q: G+ • Write for price

This is a collaboration between Dick Metcalf and Bret Hart. It sounds very similar to many of the artists who spend their time twisting and prodding strange sounds from the electric guitar, mutating its natural cleanliness into wild-eyed jabber—and Bret Hart seems quite the master at this. But take a closer listen, and you're suddenly surprised to hear that the musical foundation for all this quirkiness is really Jazz. In my mind, there's a certain beauty to that. And this tape also. See also: Ken Rubenstein, Gentlemaniac

Bob Zander

□Friend For Life

★★★★1/2

2924 37th Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55408

Improv • 1988 • SQ: Ex • Write for Price

Very free acoustic-oriented improvisations. No, not really free—usually linked to some sort of base. But rather open and quite joyous at times. This will get you smiling. Max Swanson's flute really makes me happy, and the instrumental backing is forever interesting, striking a good balance between cohesion and autonomy—the great improvisational struggle. This time out, Bob Zander and friends win out. Their love of the music really shines through on this release. See also: Dirk Hartung Combo, Exiles, the Urban Ambience Orchestra.

Zidbovinesik

□II - III - IV

★★★

Dan Fioretti/Kitti Tapes, 312 N. 3rd Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904

Electronic • Yr Unknown • SQ: G • Price?

Nice electronic meandering with occasional spoken word and text throughout. It really has a certain flow and structure, and never really ventures outside of this. Slightly classical in nature, toying with snippets of melody, only to leave them behind again

for other territory. Bovine references abound, in a very ethereal sort of way. See also: Ken Clinger, Pawnee Ribber, Larry Ruhl.

Compilation Tapes

Compilation tapes are tapes comprised of various artists. Because of their usually diverse nature, "see also:" references are not included with Compilation Tape reviews.

□All Coverz

Addled, PO Box 40421, Tucson, AZ 85717

Song • 1989 • Normal 60min • SQ: G • Price?

This tape consists of, "Hometapers performing their unique interpretations of other hometapers' boss, happenin', fabulous tunes....." The roster: Don Campau, The Room 101, Rich Hardesty, Dino DiMuro, Fred North, Nick, Al Perry, Fish Karma, Ken Clinger and Gabby. They perform songs by Ken Clinger, Al Perry, Fish Karma, Roberta Eklund, Don Campau, Fred North, Dino DiMuro and Nick. Sort of clique-ish, I suppose; but these are all very outstanding songs—and it works. It works!

□Anomaly

★★★★5/8

Experimental Audio, 2251 Helton Dr. #N7, Florence, AL 35830

Experimental/Poetry • 1989 • SQ: VG • Price?

Experimental Audio is writer Jake Berry's tape label, and much of the stuff here explores music and sound in much the same way as Jake does in the writings I'm seen by him. There's a lot of variety to, not to mention a lot of stuff (36 pieces!) from an outright choral (very nice, incidentally) to outright noise. And the whole flows very smoothly.

□The Big Deal Compilation

★★★★

IRRE-Tapes, c/o M. Lang, Barendellstrasse 35, 6795 Kindsbach, WEST GERMANY

Song • 1989 • Sound Q: VG • Write for price

You can always count on Matthias to delivery some very good stuff to your mailbox, and this is no exception. Most of the bands on this are pretty much European rock, and because their all very good, nothing stands out really. I'd definitely recommend IRRE as a source for International tapes.

□CASSETTEFEST 1988

★★★7/8

WCSB, RT 956, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH 44115

Song • 1988 • Sound Q: F-G • \$2.50

WCSB puts on the Cassettestest every year and got over 400 submissions this time out. Pretty diverse selection to, but nobody to go hog wild over, I guess. Rock and more experimtnal pieces — but mostly everything is in avein influenced by rock. This is an applaudable idea and deserves some support. and judging from the response, maybe more stations should undertake this sort of project.

□From the Pages of Experimental Musical Instruments

EMI, PO Box 784, Nicasio, CA 94946

ANOMALY



Offspring
Todd Nipper
The Intuitive Bikers
Carl Post
David Stenshoel
Peter Stenshoel
Max Swanson
Bob Zander

~~Errata~~

Missed Addresses:

Eugene Chadbourne, 707 Longview Dr., Greensboro, NC 27403

Addled Recordings, PO Box 40421, Tucson, AZ 85717

Ken Rubenstein, 45 Belmont Ave., Garfield, NJ 07026

Big Harmony Records, 8 Whalley Grove, Manchester, M16 8DN, U.K.

NOTES

Write to GAJOOB!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

